

RAISING AWARENESS OF THE  
EFFECTS OF SHAME  
ON WOMEN

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## CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	v
DEDICATION .....	vii
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS .....	ix
EPIGRAPH .....	x
INTRODUCTION .....	1
CHAPTER	
1.    MINISTRY FOCUS .....	6
2.    BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS .....	29
3.    HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS .....	52
4.    THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS .....	71
5.    INTERDISCIPLINARY FOUNDATIONS .....	102
6.    PROJECT ANALYSIS .....	120
APPENDIX	
A.    WORKSHOP FLYER .....	156
B.    AGENDA .....	158
C.    GROUND RULES/EXPECTATIONS .....	161
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	163

## **ABSTRACT**

### **RAISING AWARENESS OF THE EFFECTS OF SHAME ON WOMEN**

by  
Kimberley R. Johnson  
United Theological Seminary, 2021

#### **Mentors**

Sharon Ellis Davis, PhD, DMin  
Thomas L. Francis, DMin

The context of my ministry research project is Peace Baptist church in Cincinnati, Ohio. The problem in my context is many women are unaware of the negative effects of shame and reluctant to disclose to church congregants for fear of rejection and judgement. My hypothesis is, if women are provided a biblically based awareness workshop on the effects of shame, then women will become better equipped to identify their negative shame-based behaviors and begin their journey towards healing. My hypothesis will be measured using qualitative analysis. My ministry project was successful.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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to make sure we are all doing well personally, spiritually, and academically have been priceless. It seems like yesterday that we began this journey together. It is surreal that we are completing our journey at United Theological Seminary, yet we are forever connected.

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## **DEDICATION**

All praise, glory and honor belong to you Lord God!! My heart is overflowing with unspeakable joy!! You have provided everything I need!! You blessed me with this milestone!!

I dedicate this to my grandparents. How I miss you so! You showed me the value of family and made each one of your grandchildren feel special and loved. Your strength made me strong!!

I dedicate this to my dad and mom. I can never thank you both enough for introducing me to Jesus Christ, loving me unconditionally, praying for me, believing in me, and supporting me, and for all the sacrifices seen and unseen throughout my whole life. Your perseverance made me persevere!!

I dedicate this to my children. I would not be where I am today if it were not for you!! Thank you for loving me, being patient with me, and supporting me. You have sacrificed so much!! I am who I am and where I am today because of you!!

I dedicate this to my grandbabies!! You are my sweet heartbeats who kept me hopeful during difficult times. You made me smile through my tears!!

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I dedicate this to my extended family, friends and colleagues!! You have provided a support system, much needed breaks, fun times, and laughter!! You kept me balanced!!

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## ILLUSTRATIONS

### Tables

1	2010 Avondale census.....	14
2	2015 Cincinnati violent crime report .....	15
3	John 4:16-18 translations.....	44

Shame hates it when we reach out and tell our story. It hates having words wrapped around it—it can't survive being shared. Shame loves secrecy. When we bury our story, the shame metastasizes.

—Brené Brown

## **INTRODUCTION**

In chapter one, the ministry project is introduced. The title of this ministry project is “Raising Awareness of the Effects of Shame on Women.” The context of this ministry project is the identified church located in the community of Avondale in Cincinnati, Ohio. The problem in my context is that many women do not recognize shame as a source of their internal and relational struggles. They are unaware of the negative effects of shame and may be reluctant to disclose their shameful experiences to church leaders and congregants due to a fear of being publicly exposed, rejected and judged. I, as an ordained minister of the gospel and independently licensed community counselor, have observed behaviors in the church I recognize as shame based. Women do not have to suffer negative emotions which impact their personal and interpersonal relationships.

In chapter two, the biblical passage, John 4:16-18, is examined. A counseling and discipling model to be used by the church in helping women heal from shame is discovered. The counseling and discipling model that Jesus exemplifies in this pericope:

1. Be intentional in meeting a woman in a safe place and initiate a one-on-one private and confidential dialogue.
2. Slowly develop a rapport with a woman to discover what her presenting issues are and use this as a platform to explore a deeper need that can only be filled by Jesus.

3. Use discernment and timing to know when to explore shameful messages that may be negatively impacting a woman.
4. Introduce Jesus as the living water who gives eternal life, fulfillment and healing to a woman.
5. One-on-one counseling and disciplining will create witnesses to go out and tell others in their families, neighborhoods and social circle of a man who knows everything about them yet wants to be in a relationship with them and change their lives.

In chapter three, the history of shame is explored. The era of public shaming and public humiliation traces its roots back to biblical times in which Adam and Eve were the first people identified to experience shame because of their disobedience to God and sin that resulted in their eyes being opened, their nakedness that was once covered was uncovered. Their response was to attempt to cover their own nakedness, hide in shame from God and from one another. However, God did not publicly shame Adam and Eve but offered them the opportunity to confess their sins to Him who provided covering for their nakedness that scholars equate to shame.

Public shaming and public humiliation have, historically, been displayed in churches as a means to bring women to conformity. Traditions, norms and expectations established were either spoken or unspoken. Dress codes, marital status, sexual history, classism, sexism and labeling – not with a “Scarlet Letter” but with a scarring label attached to them based on the church community’s perception of the woman failing to meet their standards.

Just as the message of the gospel never changes but the methodology of the way it is shared changes, so it is for public shaming and humiliation that has never changed and has existed since the beginning of time evolving from pillories, stocks, whippings, ostracizing and excommunication from the church. In today's time, society engages in cyberbullying, in-person bullying, sexual harassment, and shaming messages being posted on the internet, social media and via text messages.

In chapter four, Feminist Theology and Atonement Theology speak to women's struggles with shame by presenting God as the One who provides covering of humanity's shame. As the women's right movement came on the horizon to sound the alarm for women to receive social, economic and political equality with men, women in the faith community were stirred to pursue gender equality in biblical interpretation of women's roles and positions. Traditional Christianity was saturated in a male-dominated backdrop and its biblical interpretation classified women as subservient to men. Feminist theologians believed that women would not experience civil rights equality until change occurred in traditional Christianity's view that God created women as second class to men. In other words, to effect change in the treatment of women in the community meant to effect change in the treatment of women in the faith community. These challenges continue to face women on a secular and non-secular level.

In chapter five, the field of psychology and more specifically, Relational-Cultural Theory (RCT) are examined. Psychology provides the avenue for women who are shamed to explore the impact of shame on their mental, emotional, and spiritual health because of past hurts, rejection, humiliation, exclusion and traumatic events that have left women experiencing shame. Women experience shame because they have not met their

expectations, the expectations of others and even the expectations of God. As psychology examines the development of women, relationships have been proven to be the crux of women having the opportunity to re-create their experiences through Relational-Cultural Therapy based on the premise that people desire to be connected and in community.

Many women are suffering from depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, and low self-worth as they have been targets due to race, gender and disabilities. They have been met with injustices from society due to racism, sexism and classism. This has resulted in many women being devalued and viewed as marginal or invisible.

God's perfect plan has always been to restore the relationship and fellowship between Himself and humankind. His perfect provision was His son Jesus Christ who died so that our relationship with God would be restored. Jesus exemplified the importance of relationship with those who were shamed and oppressed. His pursuit of authentic relationships with humankind provides an opportunity for women to be vulnerable and entered relationships with the One whom they can trust with their deepest pain and discover their true identity in Him rather than from the expectations of themselves and others.

In chapter six, my hypothesis, if women are provided a biblically based awareness workshop on the effects of shame, then women will become more knowledgeable of shame and better equipped to identify their negative shame-based behaviors and begin the journey towards healing was proven based on the responses from the participants during and after the workshop. Having the opportunity to share in the workshop and gaining awareness is the beginning of the healing process. Based upon the post-survey results, State Shame and Guilt Scale, participant comments, level of transparency from the

participants and speakers, along with the post-workshop individual participants' feedback during Zoom interviews, the workshop was a success.



## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **MINISTRY FOCUS**

As I reflect on the church I currently serve in ministry, I wonder how many members of the church and people living in the community surrounding the church do not have peace which comes from Jesus Christ. Some do not or have not experienced the peace of God because either they do not know God, or they wonder where God was during their most painful life circumstances. Others do not believe they are worthy of God's love or forgiveness. Trauma survivors, within the church and the community, who have experienced or have been exposed to traumatic life events are at risk of developing maladaptive emotions of shame and guilt that work in opposition to God's peace.

Author Brené Brown defines shame as “the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing that we are flawed and therefore unworthy of love and belonging.”<sup>1</sup> Shame presents initially in our biology. It is a physiological response to external events and over time, internal memories or scripts of early shameful events. A physical manifestation of shame results in blushing, looking downward and desiring to

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<sup>1</sup> Brené Brown, *I Thought It Was Just Me: Women Reclaiming Power and Courage in a Culture of Shame* (New York, NY: Gotham, 2007), 5, Kindle.

hide or shrink. Shame is felt in our physical bodies before it is translated into cognition and emotions.<sup>2</sup> Shame focuses on who we are, and guilt focuses on our behaviors.<sup>3</sup>

Research shows that women have a higher propensity to experience guilt and shame feelings than men. Guilt is an interpersonal emotion that requires the ability to empathize. Both interpersonal connections and being aware of others' emotional state are linked to traditional socialization of young girls who are taught to comply with friends, make amends with friends, and serve others. Gender role researchers have discovered that traditional female gender socialization may place females at risk of guilt- and shame-proneness and predispose them to psychological problems as adults.<sup>4</sup> The ultimate goal of healing guilt is forgiveness, whereas shame seeks acceptance.”<sup>5</sup>

To make matters worse, trauma survivors sit in church pews or in their homes in pain because they do not know with whom they can share their painful experiences. Often, they worry if they will be further shamed or made to feel guilty. This gives the enemy, Satan himself, a playing field to hold trauma survivor's hostage to the pain, shame and guilt. When trauma survivors muster up enough courage to reach out for counseling, they typically reach out to the pastor of a local church because many view the pastor as a safe person who will hold in confidence their most painful accounts of their

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<sup>2</sup> Miriyam Clough, “Atoning Shame,” *Feminist Theology* 23, no. 1 (2014): 8, <https://doi.org.dtl.idm.oclc.org/10.1177/096673501452374>.

<sup>3</sup> Brown, *I Thought It Was Just Me*, 13, Kindle.

<sup>4</sup> Jessie Benett-McQuoid and Krisanne Bursik, “Individual Differences in Experiences of and Responses to Guilt and Shame: Examining the Lenses of Gender and Gender Role,” *Sex Roles* 53, no. 1/2 (July 2005): 132-242, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-005-5287-4>.

<sup>5</sup> Ronda L. Dearing and June Price Tangney, *Shame in the Therapy Hour* (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2011), 25, <https://search-proquest-com.dtl.idm.oclc.org/psychbooks/docview/1024344529>.

traumatic experiences. Many view the church as a safe haven. However, many pastors are overwhelmed with the volume of people seeking counseling and often they may need professional clinical counseling or long-term counseling services to address these complex issues related to past and or present trauma.

Pastors may request that other church leaders counsel church members and non-members, but many of them are unaware of the signs and symptoms of trauma and are ill equipped to identify and address trauma and the emotional impact of shame and guilt. Trauma is no respecter of persons and crosses all socio-economic, demographic, gender, cultural and religion. Unrecognized and unaddressed trauma will limit victims of trauma to only being classified as trauma survivors and not present an opportunity for them to be reclassified as trauma thrivers, know that they are more than conquerors, and nothing can separate them from the love of God as stated in Romans 8:37-38.

It is also heartbreaking when I ponder about the number of people, who sit in the church pews of a brick and mortar building Sunday after Sunday, struggling with past and present messages of shame and guilt that either stem from their repeated negative thoughts within their own minds or from the mouths of others. It is heartbreaking when I consider the number of people who stand outside the brick and mortar walls of the church in the community because the shame and guilt that they carry has led them to conclude that they are not worthy or good enough to go inside the church or be in God's presence.

Many times, I hear church leaders encouraging congregants to come up for prayer and share their concerns and burdens on their hearts or to be transparent during small group Bible studies or fellowships. However, for many, this places them at risk of being further shamed and pained. Is the church building a safe place for trauma survivors inside

and outside the walls to come in and be transparent? Are church leaders and congregants safe persons for trauma survivors to disclose sensitive, shameful and painful accounts? Although many of them have a sincere desire to help people experience the peace of God, church leaders and congregants may unintentionally inflict further pain and injury because they are ill prepared.

The church is often referred to as a hospital. Hospitals are ranked by the number of medical specialties offered and their performance ranking in these specialties. However, unlike a hospital that offers specialized care, the identified church and many other churches in the Avondale community in which the church is located, do not have a holistic approach to addressing the needs of the people within and without the church as it relates to addressing trauma survivors. The hierarchy in most hospitals ranges from the medical director, head of the department, attending physician, fellow, chief resident, senior resident, junior resident, intern and medical student. Like many churches, the identified church's hierarchy consists of the pastor, church leaders and congregants. As a result, the church does not offer a specialty department – a pastoral care and counseling center with a hierarchy of people trained and specializing in Trauma-Informed Care and Trauma-Responsiveness. At best, the pastor may be the only one formally trained in pastoral care and counseling and equipped to provide biblical counseling to help trauma survivors struggling with shame and guilt.

In Psalm chapter fifty-one, David takes his guilt and shame to God and no one else. I remember looking for true forgiveness, comfort, healing, peace and unconditional love from people who meant well but could not offer any of these permanently, but only temporarily. Traumatic events I experienced from childhood through my adulthood left

me with multiple messages of shame and guilt and feeling as if I had no one to share my most painful experiences; and ultimately, I suffered in silence because I did not know who would bless me with the gift of listening while remaining empathetic, genuine and non-judgmental and holding my shared experiences and feelings in confidence.

Trauma-Informed Care and Trauma-Responsive counseling is an area of ministry that is imperative to the spiritual growth of members and non-members. Trauma-Informed Care provides education to recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma. Trauma-Responsiveness provides education and training on how to create a safe place, be a safe person and assess, respond and treat trauma survivors.

After examining the traditional model of counseling that is primarily provided by church pastors, I am interested in introducing and erecting a new model of pastoral care and counseling to members and non-members. The new counseling ministry will encompass a community based Christian counseling center that is staffed with Christian counselors who are licensed mental health professionals, life coaches and lay members and non-members who have the gift of helps and exhortation, trained on the topics of trauma, Trauma-Informed Care and Trauma-Responsiveness and most importantly, called by God. This new model and ministry would serve as an opportunity for the identified church to establish a collaborative partnership with other churches and organizations in the Avondale community and meet the mission and vision of the identified church, the Avondale Community Council and the Avondale community redevelopment partnerships. Since the identified church is in the heart of Avondale, residents would no longer have to suffer in silence but have an opportunity to address their traumatic, shameful and painful experiences in a safe environment and with a safe and trustworthy

person. This will not only be an opportunity to provide counseling, but to disciple many from the community and within the congregation.

### **Context**

The identified church is a predominantly African American congregation located in Cincinnati, Ohio in the Avondale community that is divided into North Avondale and South Avondale. The membership of the church is approximately two-hundred and fifty. Thirty-five percent of the congregants are males and sixty-five percent are females. Fifty-three percent are married couples. Six and a half percent of the congregation are children (ages zero to twelve), five and a half percent are teenagers (ages thirteen to nineteen), twenty-two percent are young adults (ages twenty to thirty-nine), thirty-six percent are middle age adults (ages forty to fifty-nine), twenty-five and a half percent are mature adults (ages sixty to sixty-nine) and four and a half percent are older adults (ages seventy and older).<sup>6</sup>

Majority of the congregants own homes in suburban neighborhoods surrounding the greater Cincinnati area and own cars that they drive to church. Their financial and economic resources exceed the community in which they attend church. Their education, employment, household makeup, marital status, health care coverage and socio-economic status is significantly different to the residents living in the community of South Avondale that is plagued by high crime, drug abuse and drug trafficking, low-income housing, poverty level income, single parent households, despair and oppression.

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<sup>6</sup> Peace Baptist Church, "Mission and Vision," Peace Baptist Church, <http://peacebaptist.org/mission-and-vision>.

However, over the past twenty years, the population of Avondale is slowly changing as consortiums, businesses, organizations and local hospitals are seeking opportunities to purchase properties in Avondale as part of the redevelopment and revitalization plans. The Avondale Community Council holds regular meetings for residents, church leaders and businesses to stay abreast of the plans for Avondale. The identified church has been approached by local and out-of-town businesses and local consortiums asking if the church is interested in selling. However, either there was no formal bid made on our church's property or the price offered was not accepted.

The identified church initially began with pastors serving the congregation for short-term periods. The last four pastors have served long-term and ministries have been developed and continued to evolve during their tenures. Through prayer, preaching, teaching, discipleship and a show of love towards the members individually and collectively, the current pastor has made a significant impact in the lives of the congregants throughout his thirteen-year tenure. Since casting the vision for the church, his ministry has been instrumental in the church making a paradigm shift to align with the blueprint of the first century church in Acts 2:42-47.

In 2015, the pastor of the identified church cast God's vision for the church. The vision included relocating the congregation to another neighborhood and growing into a multiethnic congregation. However, some of the leaders and congregants struggled with leaving the current location and the church remained where it is today. The vision also included becoming a more intimate congregation by loving people inside and outside of the church to life in Jesus Christ. The establishment of "Doing Life Together" (DLT) small groups of approximately fifteen participates who are members and non-members of

the church has made great progress towards this goal. Retreats, specifically, for ministers, women, men, teenagers, children, singles and married couples have also been impactful in building intimacy amongst the members and non-members. However, the greatest paradigm shift occurred with the restructuring of church leadership and the introduction of shared leadership in the formation of the Elder ministry composed of the senior pastor and the appointment of three adult male and three adult female Elders.

The Elder ministry has resulted in each elder being individually assigned to oversee a specific area of ministry to alleviate the high volume of responsibilities of the pastor and to align with the word of God. This afforded the current pastor more preparation time for prayer, preaching and teaching. However, he remains the primary person to counsel members and non-members. Largely, this is due to the members being accustomed to a traditional model. This continues to present as a major area of concern as the volume of requests for counseling within and without the church is constant and absorbs a significant amount of the pastor's time. Many of the presenting problems have long-term needs rather than short-term. Concerns such as marital conflict, divorce, parent-child relationship problems, grief and loss, victimization, depression, anxiety and even conflict with another congregant initially are the presenting problems. During the course of counseling, it is typically discovered that the underlying root problems require professional clinical mental health skills sets and training to address these underlying problems that are interfering in the functioning of the person.

The vision and goals of the Avondale Community Council proposed a collaboration and partnership of community organizations and hospitals such as Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, the Health Alliance and the Cincinnati



Zoo and Botanical Gardens. This serves as an opportunity to impact the community in which the identified church is located. According to the Avondale Census 2010, the population, household income, education and crime ranking statistics of the Avondale community are as followings:<sup>7</sup>

Table 1. 2010 Avondale census

	Census Tract				
	66	68	69	270	Totals

TOTAL POPULATION	2,255	3,871	2,822	3,518	12,466
Male:	1,054	1,737	1,323	1,618	5,732
Female:	1,201	2,134	1,499	1,900	6,734

HOUSEHOLD INCOMES					
Less than \$10,000	358	549	341	542	1,790
\$10,000 to \$14,999	200	184	171	109	664
\$15,000 to \$19,999	46	91	109	102	348
\$20,000 to \$24,999	0	250	88	114	452
\$25,000 to \$29,999	38	89	47	46	220
\$30,000 to \$34,999	43	71	78	41	233
\$35,000 to \$39,999	84	75	49	80	288
\$40,000 to \$44,999	25	53	19	49	146
\$45,000 to \$49,999	0	39	26	33	98
\$50,000 to \$59,999	12	87	67	54	220
\$60,000 to \$74,999	50	40	108	60	258

<sup>7</sup> City of Cincinnati, "2010 Cincinnati Statistical Neighborhood Approximations," City of Cincinnati Census and Demographics, <https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/planning/reports-data/census-demographics>.

\$75,000 to \$99,999	31	61	96	19	207
\$100,000 to \$124,999	19	36	110	30	195
\$125,000 to \$149,999	14	25	11	11	61
\$150,000 to \$199,999	0	8	46	0	54
\$200,000 or more	0	52	10	0	62
Median household income (dollars)**	\$ 11,809	\$ 20,901	\$ 23,807	\$ 14,545	\$ 18,120

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT					
Total	870	2515	1,919	1768	7,072
Less than 9th grade	47	183	57	154	441
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	169	640	331	300	1,440
High school graduate (and equivalency)	340	894	490	504	2,228
Some college, no degree	263	269	689	540	1,761
Associate degree	27	120	89	53	289
Bachelor's degree	6	298	78	173	555
Graduate or professional degree	18	111	185	44	358

According to the city of Cincinnati's 2015 Violent Crime Report, the community of Avondale has ranked number one from 2011 – 2015.<sup>8</sup>

Table 2. 2015 Cincinnati violent crime report

Rank	Neighborhood	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Δ 14-15
1	AVONDALE	32	34	45	50	52	↑2
2	WESTWOOD	22	27	18	15	46	↑31
3	WALNUT HILLS	20	29	21	28	38	↑10
4	OVER-THE-RHINE	69	41	55	28	36	↑8
5	WEST END	26	24	30	25	34	↑9

<sup>8</sup> Cincinnati Ohio City Government, "Cincinnati Police Department 2015 Crime Summary and End-of-Year Report," Cincinnati Ohio City Government, <https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/cityofcincinnati/assets/File/CY2015%20Year%20End%20Report>.

6	MOUNT AIRY	13	11	12	12	23	↑11
7	WINTON HILLS	18	12	27	15	20	↑5
8	EAST PRICE HILL	13	26	24	25	18	↓7
9	ROSELAWN	23	17	15	13	17	↑4
9	EAST WESTWOOD	9	3	9	10	17	↑7

According to the National Institute of Health, “For many who live in the City of Cincinnati, Avondale has the perception of having a high rate of crime. District Four police includes eleven neighborhoods of which Avondale is the largest inland area and population. The Cincinnati Police department noted in 2012 that there were a total of 741 violent crimes in District Four: sixteen homicides, seventy-one rapes, 443 robberies, and 211 aggravated assaults.”<sup>9</sup>

### **Ministry Journey**

I believe everything that I have experienced has been allowed by God and used by God to prepare me to become the person I am today, place me on the spiritual path to grow in relationship with Him and propel me into the ministry He has set before me. I used to ask God, “Why Me?” when it related to traumatic experiences in my life and still ask this question today. However, I ask this question from the lens of amazement that God can take all things, not just the good things, but even the devastating, shameful and traumatic experiences and make them work for my good as recorded in Romans 8:28.

Growing up in the church in which I currently serve in ministry, I had the opportunity to sing in the children’s choir, teen choir, adult choir, praise team, play the piano for Sunday school, give an overview of Sunday school lessons as a teenager, teach

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<sup>9</sup> Cincinnati Ohio Government, “Effects of Permanent Supportive Housing on Vulnerable Community: Health Impact Assessment on the Commons of Alaska,” Cincinnati Ohio Government, <https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/health/assets/File/Commons>.

Sunday school for the teens, teach Bible study for young adults, women's classes, general assembly of men and women and oversee the singles ministry. Over the course of my young adulthood into my adulthood years, members of my church would ask to talk to me in private and share some of their most shameful and painful experiences in confidence. Not only would this happen in the church but in the community. I have experienced perfect strangers asking me to pray with them and began to share their painful experiences.

As a therapist at a local juvenile court and at the private practice where I serve, I have been amazed at the number of people from diversified backgrounds feeling safe to show me their hearts, share traumatic experiences that they report never sharing before and to trust that when they leave my presence, they leave with their dignity and not walk away further shamed, judged, blamed or added guilt. I used to jokingly say, "Do I have a sign on my forehead that says, 'Tell me your problems?'"

When I listened to the traumatic stories shared by youth and their caregivers whom I was blessed to counsel, I often said to myself, "There go I by the grace of God." Their stories included financial struggles, being a single parent or the primary caretaker of grandchildren. Some had to ride multiple buses with small children to come to court only to be disrespected, misunderstood, judged and shamed. Many women were shamed by court personnel because they had multiple children by different men, were unemployed, unmarried and received government assistance. Some were on the verge of a mental breakdown, trapped in abusive relationships, prone to violence, and abuse. Even worse, some witnessed their loved ones and close friends die of natural death or from

being murdered. Sadly, when they reached out for help, what they received was more shame, pain, and heartbreak.

Five years ago, I began to hear God calling me to pursue my doctoral degree in Pastoral Care and Counseling at United Theological Seminary (UTS). As my retirement date was drawing near, I began praying and seeking information. I attended an orientation at UTS and God confirmed in my spirit that UTS was the next chapter in my life to pursue my doctorate in Pastoral Care and Counseling. In 2008, I acknowledged my call to ministry to my current pastor, who along with my former pastor, had already approached me about running from my call to ministry. I grew up in a very traditional Baptist church and wanted no part of more trauma. In 2011, I preached my initial sermon and was licensed as a gospel preacher in my church. In 2015, I was ordained as a licensed preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In 2018, I was ordained as an Elder. My current and former pastors have made a significant impact in my life.

For many years, I believe I suffered in silence. The church I attend is in a predominantly African American urban neighborhood that is filled with high crime, violence, abuse, neglect, drugs, oppression, single parents and poverty. Five years ago, God burdened my spirit with a vision to establish a Pastoral Care Ministry either within my local church or community so that people will have an opportunity to share in confidentiality their problems and concerns so they will no longer have to suffer in silence. I get excited and overjoyed when I see God bring healing in the lives of people. This is a passion that God has placed in my spirit and I am compelled to walk out God's plan for my life by faith.

### **Develop the Synergy**

As I reflect over my life, I recall significant traumatic experiences that led me to be consumed with feelings of shame and guilt and not being good enough. I believe I suffered in silence because I did not know who I could trust to share my painful life events without being judged, further shamed or afraid that whatever I shared would not be shared with anyone else without my permission. When I became an unwed pregnant mother at age nineteen, I worried about what church members would say, especially the older women or “mothers of the church” who carried themselves as if they were holy and never sinned. The fact that I was expected to partake in the shameful common practice in which unwed mothers were summoned to the front of the church to ask the church for forgiveness was shameful. This same practice was not held for unwed fathers. However, I was blessed to not partake in this tradition. Instead, I was embraced and encouraged by my parents, my immediate family and my former pastor’s wife and former pastor, who baptized me.

Under another former pastor, children born out of wedlock were dedicated to the Lord in the basement of the church instead of in the church sanctuary. When I returned to college as an unwed mother, I joined a church under “watch care” of a pastor who along with his wife encouraged, counseled, picked up my college roommate and me every Sunday and took us to church. We enjoyed dinner with them after church. This was a totally different experience than when I sought counsel from another pastor of a different congregation than my home church. As I shared with this pastor one of my most shameful and painful experiences in my life, instead of being met with empathy and compassion, I was further shamed, more guilt added and left feeling worse than when I

reached out for wise counsel. This experience resulted in me being consumed with shame and guilt for five years before the Lord delivered me one day when I opened my Bible and it immediately fell to Psalm chapter fifty-one.

I realized that it did not matter how many people I could have gone to, God was the only One who could forgive me, help me to forgive the person who hurt me to the core and forgive myself. In Psalm chapter fifty-one, David acknowledged that the One he sinned against was God and only God was justified to judge him. He acknowledged that he was a sinner by birth but did not use this as an excuse for his sinful behavior. He asked God to have mercy on him, blot out his transgressions and cleanse him from his sin. He confessed his sin that consumed his spirit. David requested God create within him a clean and pure heart. He further asked God to replace his brokenness with restored joy. And he asked God not to cast him from his presence or take away the Holy Spirit.

David further acknowledged that when God answered all his requests, then he was able to teach other sinners God's ways so that they too could be saved; and he was free to open his mouth to loudly sing of God's righteousness. Like David, God has forgiven, cleansed, restored my joy, and made me glad again. He removed my guilt and shame and birthed a passion inside of me to sing songs of worship to him and patiently teach and model the love of God in leading others who suffer in silence to experience God's salvation, forgiveness and healing.

Over the past thirty-one years, I have been blessed to work for a local juvenile court where I now know the Lord orchestrated and directed my path to seek employment in a place I never knew existed. I have heard the heartbreaking traumatic stories of youth and their parents and or guardians. I have witnessed court personnel humiliate and shame

parents, legal guardians, and youth and never acknowledge their trauma. Many of the parents and or legal guardians already experience shame and guilt when they lose custody of their children and are told they are bad, horrible and incompetent parents without knowing their stories.

As a former juvenile corrections officer, probation officer and team manager and as a current clinical manager and mental health therapist at a local juvenile court, I have worked with at risk youth and families who have experienced and continued to experience trauma in their lives. Oftentimes, the youth's delinquent or criminal behavior resulted in them having contact with the court and the beginning of a juvenile court record. Many of their parents have past involvement with juvenile court and current involvement with the adult court and Children Services. Many of the youth and parents have undiagnosed, misdiagnosed or improperly treated mental and or emotional health concerns.

Approximately fifteen years ago while serving in the juvenile court probation department as a Probation Officer and later as a Probation Team supervisor, I conducted a female-specific training in the community. During the training, I shared that many of the youth involved in the juvenile court system that I worked for, have been exposed to or experienced trauma that has been overlooked in many of the youth's clinical assessments as majority of the youth do not receive a diagnosis of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) but rather Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) or Conduct Disorder (CD). I provided supportive evidence that the majority of juvenile court-involved youth live in neighborhoods that are like war zones plagued with violence, shootings and chronic exposure to death and dying resulting



in many of the youth and families experiencing trauma symptoms as outlined in the DSM-IV-TR used at that time. After the training, a Vietnam War veteran requested to speak to me privately and expressed feeling insulted because he believed that the experiences of the youth and families involved with juvenile court did not compare to his experience in war. I thanked him for speaking with me privately, explained that my intent was not to compare but to raise awareness of the effects of trauma being experienced in the local communities and households.

In a research study conducted to distinguish shame-proneness and guilt-proneness, the study revealed that shame-proneness that is independent of guilt-proneness has been connected to symptoms of psychological stressors inclusive of anxiety, depression, anger and PTSD.<sup>10</sup> According to the DSM-V, the criteria for PTSD includes:

- (A) Exposure to actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual violence in one (or more) of the following ways:
  - (1) Directly experiencing the traumatic event(s);
  - (2) Witnessing, in person, the event(s) as it occurred to others.
  - (3) Learning that the traumatic event(s) occurred to a close family member or close friend. In cases of actual or threatened death of a family member or friend, the event(s) must have been violent or accidental.
  - (4) Experiencing repeated or extreme exposure to aversive details of the traumatic event(s) (e.g., first responders collecting human remains; police officers repeatedly exposed to details of child abuse). Note: Criterion A4 does not apply to exposure through electronic media, television, movies, or pictures, unless this exposure is work related.
- B) Presence of one (or more) of the following intrusion symptoms associated with the traumatic event(s), beginning after the traumatic event(s) occurred:
  - (1) Recurrent, involuntary, and intrusive distressing memories of the traumatic event(s). Note: In children older than 6 years, repetitive play may occur in which themes or aspects of the traumatic event(s) are expressed.
  - (2) Recurrent distressing dreams in which the content and/or effect of the dream are related to the traumatic event(s).
  - (3) Dissociative reactions (e.g., flashbacks) in which the individual feels or acts as if the traumatic event(s) were recurring. (Such reactions may occur on a

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<sup>10</sup> Susanne L. Pineles, Amy E. Street, and Karestan E. Koenen, "The Differential Relationships of Shame-Proneness and Guilt-Proneness to Psychological and Somatization Symptoms," *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology* 25, no. 6 (2006): 689, <https://doi.org/10.1521/jscp.2006.25.6.688>.

continuum, with the most extreme expression being a complete loss of awareness of present surroundings.) Note: In children, trauma-specific reenactment may occur in play.

(4) Intense or prolonged psychological distress at exposure to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event(s).

(5) Marked physiological reactions to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event(s).

(C) Persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the traumatic event(s), beginning after the traumatic event(s) occurred, as evidenced by one or both of the following:

(1) Avoidance of or efforts to avoid distressing memories, thoughts, or feelings about or closely associated with the traumatic event(s).

(2) Avoidance of or efforts to avoid external reminders (people, places, conversations, activities, objects, situations) that arouse distressing memories, thoughts, or feelings about or closely associated with the traumatic event(s).

(D) Negative alterations of cognitions and mood associated with the traumatic events, beginning or worsening after the traumatic event(s) occurred, as evidenced by two (or more) of the following:

(1) Inability to remember an important aspect of the traumatic event(s) (typically due to dissociative amnesia and not to other factors such as head injury, alcohol, or drugs).

(2) Persistent and exaggerated negative beliefs or expectations about oneself, others, or the world (e.g., “I am bad,” “No one can be trusted,” “The world is completely dangerous,” “My whole nervous system is permanently ruined”).

(3) Persistent distorted cognitions about the cause or consequences of the traumatic event(s) that lead the individual to blame himself/herself or others.

(4) Persistent negative emotional state (e.g., fear, horror, anger, guilt, or shame)

(5) Markedly diminished interest or participation in significant activities.

(6) Feelings of detachment or estrangement from others.

(7) Persistent inability to experience positive emotions (e.g., inability to experience happiness, satisfaction, or loving feelings).

(E) Marked alterations in arousal and reactivity associated with the traumatic event(s), beginning or worsening after the traumatic event(s) occurred, as evidenced by two (or more) of the following:

(1) Irritable behavior and angry outburst (with little or no provocation) typically expressed as verbal or physical aggression toward people or objects.

(2) Reckless or self-destructive behavior.

(3) Hypervigilance.

(4) Exaggerated startle response.

(5) Problems with concentration.

(6) Sleep disturbance (e.g., difficulty falling or staying asleep or restless sleep.)

(F) Duration of the disturbance (Criteria B, C, D, and E) is more than 1 month.

(G) The disturbance causes clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.

(H) The disturbance is not attributable to the physiological effects of a substance (e.g., medication, alcohol) or another medical condition.<sup>11</sup>

If the duration of symptoms is less than three months, then symptoms are categorized as acute. If the duration of symptoms is three or more months, then symptoms are categorized as chronic. If onset of symptoms is at least six months after the stressor, then symptoms are categorized as with delayed onset.<sup>12</sup> Typical emotional responses to trauma are anger, fear, sadness and shame.<sup>13</sup> Early shame experiences reveal traumatic memory characteristics that impact shame in adulthood and influence the impact of shame on depression. Shame memories are viewed as threat memories that tend to have more emotional power than non-threat memories.<sup>14</sup> Trauma can interrupt movement in relationships.<sup>15</sup> Masking feelings of shame can protect an abuse survivor from painful current situations or past memories about events that cannot be changed.<sup>16</sup> Safe, stable and nurturing relationships and environments are critical to promoting physical and emotional healing for children and countering the negative impact of stress and trauma. Neighborhood safety and nurturing places may provide protection for children in the

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<sup>11</sup> American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders: DSM-V* (Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association, 2013), 271.

<sup>12</sup> American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 271.

<sup>13</sup> Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, “Trauma-Informed Care in Behavioral Health Services” (Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2014), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK207201/>.

<sup>14</sup> Jose Pinto-Gouveia and Marcella Matos, “Can Shame Memories Become a Key to Identity? The Centrality of Shame Memories Predicts Psychopathology,” *Applied Cognitive Psychology* 25 (2011): 282, <https://doi.org/10.1002/acp.1689>.

<sup>15</sup> Judith V. Jordan, L. M. Hartling, and M. Walker, eds., *The Complexity of Connection: Writings from the Stone Center's Jean Baker Miller Training Institute* (New York, NY: Guilford Publications, 2004), 11, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com>.

<sup>16</sup> Tamara J. Ferguson, “Mapping Shame and Its Functions in Relationships,” *Child Maltreatment* 10, no. 4 (2005): 380.

community. Raising awareness, developing a vision and partnering with others are key to creating safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments.<sup>17</sup>

I am currently an independently licensed mental health therapist with a supervisory credential in the state of Ohio. I have been in the mental health field for almost twenty years but have been exposed to the effects of trauma from my own personal life experiences as well as experiences gained in working with youth and families involved with a local juvenile court and the private practice where I am a contract therapist. In December of 2018, I began completing training to become certified in Trauma-Informed Care and Trauma-Responsiveness through a local organization. I am scheduled to complete the training and examination in June of 2019. I have been requested to participate in training to become a Certified Trauma-Informed Care trainer and to become a board member of the training organization. I interpret this as further confirmation from God on the topic of trauma and its effects.

In examining and reflecting on my own personal traumatic life events and the traumatic events that many congregants attending the identified church, other churches in the Avondale community and residents living in the community of Avondale where the identified church is located, I would like to explore the effects of shame and key factors needed to establish a counseling center to offer pastoral care and counseling in the community to allow congregants and community residents to disclose their shameful and painful experiences and not suffer in silence but move towards healing and forgiveness.

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<sup>17</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Violence Prevention Home Page," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention>.

## Conclusion

I am interested in establishing a pastoral care counseling center in the Avondale community in which my church is located to address the needs of the congregants of the identified church, congregants of churches in the Avondale community, residents in the Avondale community and in the greater Cincinnati area. The pastoral care counseling center will be a safe haven, place of refuge and a place of healing. It will provide a safe place and safe persons for people to receive biblical counseling to address and alleviate the effect of shame and guilt from traumatic experiences. Additionally, educating church leaders, congregations and community partners in the Avondale community on shame, Trauma Informed Care and the emotional impact of shame upon trauma survivors. Professionally licensed mental health counselors and lay counselors within the identified church, other churches and organizations within the community will receive training on shame, Trauma-Informed Care and Trauma – Responsiveness to effectively provide excellent pastoral care and counseling at the counseling center in the community. I am expecting to complete and be certified as a Trauma-Informed and Trauma-Responsive counselor in June 2019 through the Tristate Trauma Network located in Florence, Kentucky.

Tristate Trauma Network's mission is to "create a community-wide commitment to the prevention of and recovery from trauma and toxic stress in the Southwest Ohio, Northern Kentucky and Southeast Indiana regions."<sup>18</sup> I would also like to include a supervision, training and consultation component to equip new professional and lay counselors and social workers. Additionally, I would like to provide and coordinate

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<sup>18</sup> Tristate Trauma Network, "About Us," Tristate Trauma Network, <https://tristatetraumanetwork.org>.

ongoing trauma training for everyone living in the community or serving in this ministry or as a partner in the community. The pastoral care and counseling center will also provide an opportunity to disciple the “unchurched” and “churched” and accomplish the mission and vision of the identified church and churches in the Avondale community.

The overarching theme for my Doctor of Ministry project is shame from traumatic experiences. If trauma survivors are led to God by a safe person in a safe place, then their journey towards healing from shame can begin. God is the only One who can remove shame and guilt. Trauma survivors will have the opportunity to explore traumatic events and experience healing, forgiveness and peace. I would like to explore what constitutes a safe environment and a safe person and what are the steps to create both. Additionally, I would like to explore the steps for churches and partnerships in the community of Avondale becoming a Trauma-Informed and Trauma-Responsive community. I believe that a safe person is empathetic, genuine, compassionate, non-judgmental, and held to confidentiality except when safety concerns are present. I believe a safe place is where the Spirit of God dwells and invites people to be transparent before His presence. Both will create an opportunity for pastoral care counselors to lead trauma survivors to seek divine intervention from God as David exemplified in Psalm chapter fifty-one.

The implementation of my project will include surveys and need assessments with the identified church leaders and congregants, churches within the Avondale Community and the residents and partners of the Avondale community. A review of the city of Cincinnati census, Avondale Community Council data and redevelopment and revitalization plans for the community of Avondale will be conducted. Trauma-Informed Care and Responsiveness education and training will be provided to churches,

professional and lay counselors and partners. Researching grants available to finance my project will also be pursued. Partnerships with churches, community organizations such as the Avondale Community Council, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, University of Cincinnati Hospital, the Health Alliance, the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Gardens, Uptown Consortiums and redevelopment businesses will be sought to assist in the collection of data and financial contributions for the establishment of a pastoral care counseling center in the Avondale Community.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS**

#### **Introduction**

The biblical foundation is undergirded by John 4:1-42 with a focus on the pericope John 4:16-18. This passage of scripture sheds light on my research project because the scripture presents an account of Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman who appears to be plagued by the effects of shame. Additionally, this scripture introduces an approach and counseling model for the church to implement when seeking to help women begin their journey of healing from shame. A literary, historical, social, cultural, and an exegetical review will further expound on the application of this scripture as it correlates to the theme of my research project.

Shame plagues many women throughout the world. Author Thomas J. Scheff, supports psychologist, Gregory Kaufmann's position on shame being viewed as taboo in society because there is shame about shame. The responses of earlier studies on shame have revealed that shame has been approached as if it does not exist. Scheff cites the English language as partially disguising shame.<sup>1</sup> Oftentimes childhood and adulthood traumatic experiences, cultural expectations and moral codes place people at risk of developing shame. For women, shame causes them to view themselves in an unhealthy way and to receive negative messages from themselves or from society. Trauma

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas J. Scheff, "Shame in Self and Society," *Symbolic Interaction* 26, no. 2 (2003): 240.



survivors, within the church and the community, who have experienced or have been exposed to traumatic life events are at risk of developing maladaptive emotions of shame and guilt that work in opposition to God's peace. Author Brené Brown distinguishes shame and guilt. She defines shame as "the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing that we are flawed and therefore unworthy of love and belonging – something we've experienced, done, or failed to do makes us unworthy of connection" and guilt is "holding something we've done or failed to do up against our values and feeling psychological discomfort."<sup>2</sup>

Although shame can negatively affect a person psychologically, it can also positively influence social purposes. Erving Goffmann, a sociologist, reveals how shame, disgrace, and embarrassment assist in creating order in society and giving meaning to life. Shame's connection to collective rules and shared expectations are foundational for moral rules to be established. To avoid being judged by family, friends and the community, out of fear, people will present themselves as aligned with societal norms. Real or anticipated social sanctions for violation of group rules motivate people to engage in acceptable behavior.<sup>3</sup>

There is an old saying that "Confession is good for the soul." John 4:1-42 explores the cleansing, saving and healing power of confessing the truth to Jesus who is the only One who can save, heal and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. This passage of scripture serves as the backdrop of the pericope to be examined in John 4:16-18. Jesus

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<sup>2</sup> Brené Brown, "Shame vs. Guilt," Brené Brown, <https://brenebrown.com/articles/2013/01/14/shame-v-guilt/>.

<sup>3</sup> Melissa V. Harris-Perry, *Sister Citizen Shame, Stereotypes, and Black Women in America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014).

intentionally passes through Samaria, stops to rest, and sits down around noon at Jacob's well in Sychar, a town located in Samaria. Jesus has a one-on-one conversation at Jacob's well with a woman of Samaria who has come to draw water from the well at the hottest time of the day rather than in the cool of the morning when other women of Samaria came to draw water. During the conversation, Jesus begins to draw the woman to Himself by inviting her into a conversation. He asks her for a drink of water, to which she responds, that Jesus is a Jew; and she is a Samaritan woman. Culturally, Jesus would not be expected to ask her for water because Jews did not associate with Samaritans.

At first glance, it appears that this woman has several obstacles that would prevent her from being in the presence of Jesus. She was a Samaritan, a woman, and traveled alone to this well. Jesus continues his conversation with the woman of Samaria to distinguish between water that will temporarily quench her physical thirst and the living water that will eternally quench her spiritual thirst. During the conversation, the woman forgets her barriers and begins to respond to Jesus and inquire how she can gain access to the water that will eternally quench her thirst. Before Jesus identifies He is the living water, He asks her to go get her husband and come back to which she replies that she does not have a husband. Jesus confirms what the woman of Samaria has confessed, further points out that her past has consisted of five husbands and the man she is presently living with is not her husband. Again, Jesus confirms that she has spoken the truth.

The woman of Samaria acknowledges Jesus as a prophet and begins to inquire about the place of worship, which suggests she had prior knowledge of worship and the Messiah. Jesus continues his conversation with her as he points out that the Samaritans

worship without knowledge but now is the time when true worshippers will worship God in Spirit and in truth and God seeks such to worship Him. The Samaritan woman emphatically states that she knows Jesus, the Messiah, is coming to which Jesus reveals His identity as the One whom she has been expecting. This results in the woman releasing and leaving her water pot, going back to the town, where she was known amongst the people and encouraging them to come see a man who told her everything about her life. This implies a confession or agreement of all Jesus spoke to her about her life, but also how he eternally changed her life.

This passage presents a counseling model of how the church should address women who have experienced shame because of their own past decisions or circumstances inflicted upon them. This passage contains a private conversation between two people who address an extremely sensitive subject matter. The two people being Jesus and a woman of Samaria.

Author Sandra Schneider suggests the purpose of Jesus' dialogue with the woman at the well was to gain the love of Samaria and enter a total covenant relationship with the New Testament Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, who represents Yahweh the Bridegroom of Old Testament Israel. In the Greek language, the use of plural forms of speech indicate the Samaritan woman is a spokesperson for the people of Samaria.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Frances Taylor Gench, *Back to the Well: Women's Encounters with Jesus in the Gospels* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004), 113.

*Literary Analysis of John*

Traditions posited by Irenaeus, the Gospel of John is the fourth book of the Bible in the New Testament and may have been written late in the first century in Ephesus.<sup>5</sup> Scholars have questioned the authorship of John and presented possible authors as an authoritative witness of Jesus' ministry. John who is one of Jesus' twelve disciples, the son of Zebedee, is believed to have written the three epistles of John and the book of Revelation due to similarities in style, vocabulary and theology.<sup>6</sup> Some scholars believe that there is an earlier Gospel writing that was modified and rearranged.<sup>7</sup> The theology of John presents Jesus as the Son of God who leaves heaven to come to earth to glorify God, the Father. The following outlines the Gospel of John:

- I. The Prologue of the Gospel (1:1–18)<sup>8</sup>
- II. Introduction to Jesus (1:19–51)<sup>9</sup>
- III. The Revelation of the Glory Before the World (2:1–12:50)<sup>10</sup>
- IV. The Revelation of the Glory Before the Community (13:1–20:31)<sup>11</sup>
- V. Epilogue: Resurrection Appearances to the Disciples and Peter by the Sea (21:1–25)<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> D. Moody Smith, *Abingdon New Testament Commentaries: John* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1999), 39.

<sup>6</sup> Smith, *Abingdon New Testament Commentaries*, 24–27.

<sup>7</sup> Smith, *Abingdon New Testament Commentaries*, 27.

<sup>8</sup> Smith, *Abingdon New Testament Commentaries*, 47.

<sup>9</sup> Smith, *Abingdon New Testament Commentaries*, 65.

<sup>10</sup> Smith, *Abingdon New Testament Commentaries*, 80.

<sup>11</sup> Smith, *Abingdon New Testament Commentaries*, 248.

<sup>12</sup> Smith, *Abingdon New Testament Commentaries*, 389.

The Church assigned the name “John” to the gospel. The Gospel of John opens with an eighteen-verse prologue, is written in Greek and emphasizes the incarnation of Jesus, “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us” and the necessity of a relationship with Jesus. The end of John chapter one contains Jesus’ promise of His disciples doing greater works and the narrative following fulfills this promise.

The Gospel of John has two divisions: Jesus’ ministry found in chapters two through twelve; and Jesus’ last days found in chapters thirteen through twenty-one. The Gospel of John differs from Matthew, Mark and Luke which identify Jesus having a one-year ministry in Galilee and records one Passover feast whereas John records a three-year ministry and three Passover feasts. All four Gospels agree with Jesus’ crucifixion occurring on a Friday but Matthew, Mark and Luke record this as the first day of Passover while John records it as the Day of Preparation for the Passover.<sup>13</sup>

Unlike the other Synoptic Gospels, women hold important roles in the Gospel of John. In John 2:1-11, Jesus’ performance of His first miracle at a wedding in Cana came at the initiation of His mother. John 4:4-42, 7:53-8:11 and 11:1-44 record three distinct accounts in which Jesus has momentous conversations with women. Women are included in the account of Jesus’ preparation of death in John 12:1-8, crucifixion in John 19:25-27 and resurrection in John 20:1-18.<sup>14</sup>

The account of the Samaritan woman and Jesus in John 4:1-42 is the exact opposite of the conversation Jesus had with Nicodemus in John chapter three. The

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<sup>13</sup> Harriet Jane Olson, ed., *The New Interpreter's Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1995), 421.

<sup>14</sup> Carol A. Newsom, Sharon H. Ringe, and Jacqueline E. Lapsley, eds., *Women's Bible Commentary*, 3rd ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012), 519.

Samaritan woman and Nicodemus are opposites in terms of social, political, religious and gender roles. Nicodemus is a well-respected religious leader in the community while the Samaritan woman is despised in her community. Nicodemus has a conversation with Jesus at night while the Samaritan woman has a conversation with Jesus at noon day. At the end of Nicodemus' conversation with Jesus, he disappears in the night and there is no further knowledge of the impact of Jesus' conversation on his life. However, John four provides a vivid and clear picture of the Samaritan woman's response to Jesus' conversation with her.<sup>15</sup>

#### *Historical, Social, Cultural Context*

The Roman Empire controlled the religious, economic and social lives in ancient Palestine. The Gospel of John reflects fear amongst Jews who accepted Jesus as the Messiah. There was tension in the synagogue between the Jewish religious leaders and the Jews who accepted Jesus as the Messiah. This resulted in the latter being forced out of the synagogue by Jewish authorities. The Roman Empire controlled the religious, economic and social lives of all living in ancient Palestine. However, the Gospel of John supports a feminist review of not conforming to social structures and pressures but to stand up for their beliefs even if it cost them their lives.<sup>16</sup> It portrays Johannine Christians accepting Samaritan converts as brothers and sisters in Christ and ultimately the Samaritan woman representing the Samaritans within the Johannine Christian community. Three times the unnamed woman is identified by her ethnicity as Samaritan

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<sup>15</sup> Gench, *Back to the Well*, 112-114.

<sup>16</sup> Newsom, Ringe, and Lapsley, *Women's Bible Commentary*, 518.

in (vv. 7-9). During her conversation with Jesus in John chapter four, the Samaritan woman raises theological and religious matters in her conversation. Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman is the longest recorded conversation.<sup>17</sup>

### **Biblical Exegesis**

The pericope for my biblical foundations chapter is John 4:16-18. This passage of scripture is examined in the King James Version (KJV), New International Version (NIV), Contemporary English Version (CEV) and New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) translations. John 4:1-42 provides the context to the passage. Some scholars attribute the work of different redactors to the incoherence of John 4:1-42. Other scholars highlight different interpretations of the passage. They view the different interpretations providing a deeper understanding of the context of the pericope. From the beginning until the end, chapter four is a progressive revelation of Jesus as the central person. It further reveals the Samaritan woman's progressive deepening of her understanding of Jesus who she initially sees as a Jew (vs. 9). The Samaritan woman further ponders and asks if Jesus is greater than Jacob (vs. 12) and calls him a prophet (vs. 19). Jesus reveals himself to the Samaritan woman as the Messiah (vs. 26), which results in her inviting the Samaritan villagers to come and see for themselves if Jesus is the Messiah (vs. 30). The Samaritan villagers declare themselves that Jesus is the Savior of the world (vs. 42).<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Gench, *Back to the Well*, 110.

<sup>18</sup> Jean-Louis Ska, "Jesus and the Samaritan Woman (John 4): Using the Old Testament," *Landas* 1, no. 1 (1999): 81-82.

*Verses 1-6*

Jesus decided to leave Judea and return to Galilee after learning that the Pharisees thought that he was making and baptizing more disciples than John the Baptist although this increase in disciples was a result of the work of Jesus' disciples. Although Jesus' destination was Galilee, he was intentional in going through Samaria, Σαμάρεια (samareia) 'Samaria' (G4540) which was founded by King Omri and belonged to the clan of Shemer (1 Kings 16:24).<sup>19</sup> After Assyria conquered Samaria in 722 B.C., most of the Israelites living in Samaria were taken into Assyrian captivity leaving a remnant of Israelites who intermarried and embraced the pagan religion of the Gentiles who the Assyrians brought into Samaria.<sup>20</sup>

A hatred developed between the Samaritans and the Jews, who would have gone out of their way to avoid the Samaritans. Historically, Jews did not interact with Samaritans due to a long history of tension between the two. However, Acts 1:8 records Jesus' last words to his disciples, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witness in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth" before his ascension in Acts 1:9. In all four translations of (vs. 4), Jesus intentionally goes to Samaria rather than go around and avoid Samaria as Jews customarily did as they wanted no contact with the Samaritans. This sets the stage for his disciples to be his witnesses in Samaria.

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<sup>19</sup> Tyndale House Cambridge, "Jesus and the Woman of Samaria," Step Bible, <https://www.stepbible.org>.

<sup>20</sup> John Stevenson, "John Stevenson Bible Study Page," Angelfire, <http://www.angelfire.com/nt/theology>.



The KJV states, “And he must needs go through Samaria.” The keywords in this verse are “must needs” which is δεῖ (dei) ‘be necessary’ (G1163), it is binding, it is proper and it is inevitable.<sup>21</sup> The NIV states, “Now he had to go through Samaria.” The CEV states, “This time he had to go through Samaria.” The NRSV states, “But he had to go through Samaria.” The keyword in the NIV, CEV and NRSV is “had” which has the same definition δεῖ (dei) ‘be necessary’ (G1163).<sup>22</sup> This expands Jesus’ mission to Samaritans and women and is parallel to the account of the Samaritan mission in Acts chapter eight, which demonstrates a shift in the gospel being preached in Judea to the Gentile world.

It shows the Samaritan woman as a possible witness to Jesus, but unlike Nicodemus who is named in John chapter three and has a conversation at night with Jesus, the Samaritan woman appears to have a spiritual awakening that Nicodemus did not have. Some scholars support this interpretation that Jesus had a divine appointment to meet the Samaritan woman. However, Josephus differs with this interpretation and believes that the Jews would have taken the direct route through Samaria despite the conflict between the two groups and that the reference is merely geographical.<sup>23</sup> Verse six records Jesus arriving in Samaria and sitting down at Jacob’s well at the sixth hour (KJV) or noon day (NIV, CEV and NRSV). Jean-Louis Ska suggests that in verses sixteen through eighteen, the Samaritan woman’s total of six husbands is parallel to her arriving at the well at the sixth hour (KJV), and there were six stone jars at the wedding in Cana in

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<sup>21</sup> Stevenson, “John Stevenson Bible Study Page,” <http://www.angelfire.com/nt/theology>.

<sup>22</sup> Stevenson, “John Stevenson Bible Study Page,” <http://www.angelfire.com/nt/theology>

<sup>23</sup> Stevenson, “John Stevenson Bible Study Page,” <http://www.angelfire.com/nt/theology>.

John 2:6 which suggests Jesus may be her seventh husband and true husband as the number seven is the day God sanctified.<sup>24</sup> Genesis 24:11 references Abraham's servant arriving at the well in the evening when women go out to draw water.

### *Verses 7-15*

Jesus initiates a conversation at the well with the Samaritan woman when he asks her to draw water and to give him a drink. He initiates drawing the Samaritan woman to himself. The Samaritan woman is surprised that Jesus, who is a Jew, would ask such a request from her, a Samaritan and a woman.<sup>25</sup> Her response in which she asks Jesus, a Jew, how he would ask a drink of water from her, a Samaritan, is an indication of what she perceives as her identity. First, she implies that she is unclean in the eyes of Jews. Second, she warns Jesus that if he takes a drink from her, he will become unclean. She insinuates that she is untouchable.<sup>26</sup> Jesus has crossed three boundaries - cultural, religious and gender. Jesus and the Samaritan woman engage in a dialogue about living water which (vs. 14) defines as a "well of water springing up into eternal life" (NIV). Water and a well are both used symbolically in these verses. Rather than water springing up from a natural well, the water Jesus is offering to the Samaritan woman will spring up inside of her and she will never thirst again spiritually. Jean-Louis Ska points out that after Jesus' disciples left to buy food, Jesus and the Samaritan woman both came to the well alone.

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<sup>24</sup> Ska, "Jesus and the Samaritan Woman," 87-88.

<sup>25</sup> Ska, "Jesus and the Samaritan Woman," 83-86.

<sup>26</sup> Yousaf Sadiq, "Jesus Encounter with a Woman at the Well: A South Asian Perspective," *Missiology: An International Review* 46, no. 4 (2018): 366, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0091829618790102>.

In the Old Testament, a well was symbolic of a future marriage to take place following a meeting of a man and woman. Isaac met his future wife, Rebecca, at a well in Genesis 24:13-30. Jacob met his future wife, Rachel, at a well in Genesis 29:2-12. Moses met his future wife, Zipporah, at a well in Exodus 2:15-21. At the well, conversations occur when either the man asks for water or at the end of the conversation, the man offers water for the herd cared for by a woman who runs home to share how she met a man at the well; this resulted in the woman's parents inviting him to the home for a meal and ultimately concluding with a marriage. Meeting at a well and giving water is symbolic of a revelation of a future or real husband and can lead to marriage. The gospel of John contains allusions to the Old Testament.<sup>27</sup>

#### *Verses 19-26*

Following verses sixteen through eighteen, the Samaritan woman initiates a conversation with Jesus in which she “perceives” that Jesus is a prophet because he tells her the number of husbands she had. The word “perceives” is θεωπέω (theōreō) ‘to see/experience’ (G2334) and it means to see, look at, watch closely or experience. The word “prophet” refers to one who speaks inspired utterances; the writings of the Old Testament prophets (G4735).<sup>28</sup> The Samaritan woman begins to converse with Jesus about the place of worship whether it be in Jerusalem or Mt. Gerizim where the Samaritans worshipped.

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<sup>27</sup> Ska, “Jesus and the Samaritan Woman, 83-86.

<sup>28</sup> Tyndale House Cambridge, “Jesus and the Woman of Samaria,” <https://www.stepbible.org>.

There are some scholars who interpret this change in dialogue to the Samaritan woman's attempt to divert the attention from Jesus speaking to her about her immoral lifestyle. Unlike the Jews, the Pentateuch was the only portion of the Old Testament the Samaritans accepted. The Jews worshiped in the holy city of Jerusalem. The Samaritans established their own priesthood and established their location of worship on Mt. Gerizim in 400 BC when they erected their own temple. This evoked great tension between the Jews and the Samaritans.

Some scholars believe that the Samaritan woman's inquiry to Jesus about the place of worship was the Samaritan woman seeking the truth rather than diverting the conversation to avoid discussing her lifestyle.<sup>29</sup> It appears that the Samaritan woman is seeking the truth about worship as she agreed with Jesus and confessed that she had no husband (vs. 17) rather than attempt to defend herself, give excuses or lie when Jesus told her that she was correct in saying she has no husband, and that she already had five husbands. The man she was living with currently was not her husband (vs. 18).<sup>30</sup> When the woman agrees with Jesus that she has had five husbands and the one she is with now is not her husband, it appears that she is confessing sexual immorality and cohabitating with a man who is not her husband. However, this conclusion conflicts with the details in John that present the woman as an inquisitive religious seeker who is trusted and respected by the townspeople of Samaria.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Stevenson, "John Stevenson Bible Study Page," <http://www.angelfire.com/nt/theology>.

<sup>30</sup> Gench, *Back to the Well*, 110.

<sup>31</sup> Sandra Glahn, *Vindicating the Vixens: Revisiting Sexualized, Vilified, and Marginalized Women of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2017), chapter 12, <http://web.b.ebscohost.com.dtl.idm.oclc.org/ehost/ebookviewer>.

Scholar, Frances Taylor Gench, states that, “By directing attention to the woman’s irregular marital history, Jesus brings her face-to-face with her sin and guilt, and this self-knowledge prepares her for salvation.”<sup>32</sup> Further evidence of the Samaritan woman’s confession is found in her response in verse twenty-nine when she tells the Samaritan villagers to “Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?”

### *Verse 27-30*

Upon Jesus’ disciples return to the scene, they are amazed to see Jesus engaged in a conversation with a woman in broad daylight and even worse, a Samaritan woman. However, the disciples did not interrupt Jesus to share what they may have been thinking or feeling but rather watched and observed Jesus who was again teaching them by demonstration what they too were to do.

The Samaritan woman responds to Jesus’ invitation to accept him as the living water who will give her eternal life. This is evident as she drops her “water jar” (vs. 28) and returns to her town. She invites the Samaritan villagers to come and meet a man who told her everything about her life. She further states, “Could this be the Messiah?” (vs. 29). The word “water jar” in (vs. 28) is ὕδρία (hudria) 'jar' (G5201) and refers to a water pot pitcher, bucket or pail.<sup>33</sup> The Samaritan woman no longer needs a container to carry natural water back to her town because the spiritual water that she received from Jesus is now contained within her.

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<sup>32</sup> Gench, *Back to the Well*, 110.

<sup>33</sup> Tyndale House Cambridge, “Jesus and the Woman of Samaria,” <https://www.stepbible.org>.

### *Verses 31-38*

The scene now turns to Jesus having a conversation with his disciples at the well and the focus of the conversation is the spiritual food that Jesus offers rather than the physical food that his disciples purchased and prepared for consumption. Jesus has bread that is not literal for the disciples to consume but bread that will consume them to do the will of God who sent Jesus Christ. Two agricultural proverbs are portrayed: (1) “Four months until the harvest” and (2) “One sows and another reaps.”<sup>34</sup> Jesus is telling the disciples that now is the time he is sending them to reap the harvest that he has sown with the Samaritans who are to be included in receiving the gospel of Jesus Christ.<sup>35</sup>

### *Verses 39-42*

These verses serve as the climax of this account. The Samaritan woman becomes an effective witness of Jesus to the people of Samaria and she invites them to come and meet Jesus. Commentary states that the disciples brought lunch to Jesus; but the Samaritan woman brought the city of Samaria to Jesus.<sup>36</sup> What started as a one-on-one conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman resulted in the Samaritan woman receiving salvation, becoming a witness to her community and the community receiving salvation.

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<sup>34</sup> Charles B. Cousar and Gene M. Tucker, “The Gospel and Letters of John,” in *Interpreting Biblical Texts* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998), 150, Kindle.

<sup>35</sup> Cousar and Tucker, “The Gospel and Letters of John,” 150, Kindle.

<sup>36</sup> Cousar and Tucker, “The Gospel and Letters of John,” 150, Kindle.

Table 3. John 4:16-18 translations

<p>King James Version (KJV)</p> <p><sup>16</sup> Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.</p> <p><sup>17</sup> The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:</p> <p><sup>18</sup> For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.</p>	<p>Contemporary English Version (CEV)</p> <p><sup>16</sup> Jesus told her, "Go and bring your husband."</p> <p><sup>17-18</sup> The woman answered, "I don't have a husband."</p> <p>"That's right," Jesus replied, "you're telling the truth. You don't have a husband. You have already been married five times, and the man you are now living with isn't your husband."</p>
<p>New International Version (NIV)</p> <p><sup>16</sup> He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back."</p> <p><sup>17</sup> "I have no husband," she replied.</p> <p>Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband."</p> <p><sup>18</sup> The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."</p>	<p>New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)</p> <p><sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back."</p> <p><sup>17</sup> The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband';</p> <p><sup>18</sup> for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!"</p>

Scholar, Jean-Louis Ska, presents a question of whether there is a connection between the living water and the Samaritan woman's husband.<sup>37</sup> The word "husband" is used five times in the KJV, NIV and NRSV translations. The CEV translation used "husband" four times and the word "married" rather than the word "husband." "Husband" occurs two-hundred and ten times in the Bible. It is the Greek word ἀνὴρ (anēr) 'man' and is defined as a "man, male, husband or male person of full age and stature."<sup>38</sup> Interestingly, the word "husband" also refers to the phrase "to the men" in verse twenty-eight and "a man" in verse twenty-nine. The Greek word is

<sup>37</sup> Jean-Louis Ska, "Jesus and the Samaritan Woman (John 4): Using the Old Testament," *Landas* 1, no. 1 (1999): 81.

<sup>38</sup> Tyndale House Cambridge, "Jesus and the Woman of Samaria," <https://www.stepbible.org>.

ἄνθρωπος (anthrōpos) 'a human' and defined as a human being, person, humankind and husband. In the Old Testament "The Son of Man" meant "human being," but in the New Testament, it is used predominantly as a messianic title to emphasize Jesus' humanity.<sup>39</sup>

This pericope has generated extremely different interpretations by scholars. James McGrath points out that some scholars have interpreted this passage's reference to the Samaritan woman's husband literally. Whereas some have interpreted it symbolically representing five different tribes. Since the Samaritan woman is unnamed, there are some interpreters who view her as an allegory of Samaria and the five husbands symbolic of five locations in Samaria bought by settlers in 2 Kings 17:24. This interpretation is further supported by Jewish scriptures that equate a man and woman meeting at a well to an expectation of a wedding to follow.

The well that Jesus met the Samaritan woman is the same well that Jacob met Rachel in Genesis chapter twenty-nine and the same time, noon day in Genesis 29:7. Although this interpretation has been accepted by scholars, it does not take the historical context into account. Further, it is unlikely that the Samaritan woman had five husbands because Samaritan law, like Jewish law, did not permit a woman to initiate a divorce and multiple divorces would render her unsuitable to be married.<sup>40</sup>

It is likely that the Samaritan woman's five marriages and current cohabitation was the result of unfortunate circumstances that took the lives of her husbands, one or two divorced her or she initiated the divorce by request so that her husband could return the dowry he received at the time of their marriage. Her current marital status possibly

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<sup>39</sup> Tyndale House Cambridge, "Jesus and the Woman of Samaria," <https://www.stepbible.org>.

<sup>40</sup> James F. McGrath, "Woman at the Well," Bible Odyssey, [https://digitalcommons.butlerledu/facsch\\_papers/883](https://digitalcommons.butlerledu/facsch_papers/883).



stemmed from her having no dowry. This meant she would have no formal marriage but be considered a concubine. Another possibility is she was married to an older man who needed care and had adult children who did not want to share their inheritance with her and this left her without a dowry. Jewish culture permitted a married man to have a second wife so the Samaritan woman may have carried this status.<sup>41</sup>

The question is posed as to whether it is realistic for the Samaritan woman to have been divorced by several husbands or widowed multiple times. Since divorce, remarriage and concubines were morally acceptable during this time, interpreting the woman as immoral would be an erroneous interpretation. McGrath concludes that the account of the Samaritan woman is allegorical, Jesus is the bridegroom, a “new Jacob” who is present in this passage not to marry the Samaritan woman but to bring the Jews and Samaritans to worship. The Samaritan woman becomes a spiritual leader to the Samaritans instead of a woman who literally had five husbands.<sup>42</sup> Jesus commands the Samaritan woman to *go*, *call*, and *bring*. These commands signify that the Samaritan woman, a woman, becomes a witness to a man. Jesus challenges her to believe that with him, a woman as a witness would have a trustworthy witness. In John 20:17, outside of the tomb in a garden, Jesus makes this same command to Mary Magdalene, “Go, to my brethren and say to them...”<sup>43</sup> The fact that her community accepted her witness may reveal that she was a woman of virtue experiencing hardship possibly because of barrenness and treated as a

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<sup>41</sup> Glahn, *Vindicating the Vixens*, chapter 12.

<sup>42</sup> McGrath, “Woman at the Well,” [https://digitalcommons.butlerledu/facsch\\_papers/883](https://digitalcommons.butlerledu/facsch_papers/883).

<sup>43</sup> Kenneth E. Bailey, *Jesus through Middle Eastern Eyes* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008), 208, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/dtl/reader>.

servant. However, Jesus saw her personal needs and helped her to come out of her abusive community. He restored her dignity by respecting her humanity.<sup>44</sup>

Scholar, Frances Taylor Gench, reflects on 2 Kings chapter twenty-four in which the Assyrians brought in foreign colonists from five foreign nations into Samaria and suggests that the reference to the Samaritan woman having five husbands is symbolic of Samaria's intermarriage with foreign people and accepting of the pagan gods. She further suggests that the sixth man the Samaritan woman is currently living with, represents Roman colonization that Samaria was subjected to. Most importantly, the sole purpose of the entire dialogue between Jesus and the Samaritan woman is to persuade Samaria to fully come into covenant with the New Israel by Jesus who is the Bridegroom.

Gench notes that John Calvin portrays the Samaritan woman as a prostitute, divorcee, adulteress or a woman having an immoral lifestyle. She quotes him as saying, "The reason for this probably was that being a forward and disobedient wife, she constrained her husbands to divorce her. However, Gench states that she interprets the words thus: 'Though God joined thee to lawful husbands, thou didst not cease to sin, until, rendered infamous by numerous divorces, thou prostitutedst thyself to fornication. Moreover, Christ, in order to repress the woman's talkativeness, brought forward her former and present life.'<sup>45</sup> Gench asks the question as to whether or not the Samaritan woman is guilty of sin to which she responds, "Maybe – maybe not! We can discern that she has had a tragic personal history of some sort, but the details of it are not available to

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<sup>44</sup> Rose Mukansengimana-Nyirimana and Jonathan A. Draper, "The Peacemaking Role of the Samaritan Woman in John 4:1-42: A Mirror and Challenge to Rwandan Women," *Neotestamentica* 46, no. 2 (2012): 299-318, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43049200>.

<sup>45</sup> Gench, *Back to the Well*, 112-114.

us. In fact, to focus single-mindedly on these issues may well be to miss the main point of the conversation.”<sup>46</sup>

Author and professor Lynn H. Cohick argues that the woman was not an adulteress or a divorcee but rather a seeker of religious truth. Marriage in ancient world culture consisted of women being married as teenagers to older men who died early, and this resulted in women being widowed and remarried several times over their lifespan. The husband received a dowry from the wife’s family at the time of marriage but would have to return it if he divorced her. If the woman committed adultery, the husband could divorce his wife and keep the dowry. A woman was not permitted to divorce her husband. The Samaritan woman is cast with shame due to her being in a relationship with a man who is not her husband. However, John presents her as a religious seeker rather than an immoral woman. It is highly unlikely that the woman of Samaria was divorced five times for committing adultery as men would not have married her because she would have no monetary value.<sup>47</sup>

In Mediterranean culture, honor and shame are determined by the way a person and society view a woman or a man. Honor means to publicly recognize that his or her behaviors align with society’s expectations. A man’s honor is measured by his respect in the community, authority over his household and protecting his wife’s honor. If a man fails to protect his own reputation, provide for his family and protect his wife’s honor, his

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<sup>46</sup> Gench, *Back to the Well*, 112-114.

<sup>47</sup> Lynn H. Cohick, “The Real Woman at the Well: We Know Her as an Adulterer and Divorcee: Her Community Would Have Known Otherwise,” *Christianity Today* 59, no. 8 (2015): 66-69, AtlaSerials, Religion Collection.

honor is lost, and his wife is expected to commit adultery with a man who can provide these needs.

Additionally, a woman's honor is gauged by her sexual shame. There are two different definitions of shame applicable to a woman. The first involves her receptivity to the opinions of others. The second references her dishonor or shamelessness if she neglects her duties as a wife and mother, disobeys her husband or is sexually aggressive towards him. Committing adultery is the worst act a wife can engage in as she now has dishonored her husband, her immediate and extended family and is labeled as "soiled."<sup>48</sup>

Family honor is often connected to a woman's chastity. A woman is punished for sexual transgressions even if she is the victim of sexual assault perpetrated by a man. The punishment comes in the form of blame, social stigma and shame. At times, it results in physical violence and death. Public floggings, stoning and honor-based killings continue to be performed against girls and women who have been the victim of sexual violence.<sup>49</sup>

### Summary

The biblical passage, John 4:16-18, informs my doctoral ministry project with a counseling model to be used by the church in helping women heal from shame as it relates to trauma, poor decision-making and cultural stigmas placed on women. The Lord has given me a vision to establish a counseling ministry in the community of my church. The model that Jesus exemplifies in this pericope:

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<sup>48</sup> Renata Rabichev, "The Mediterranean Concepts of Honor and Shame as Seen in the Depiction of the Biblical Women," *Religion and Theology* 3, no. 1 (1996): 51-63.

<sup>49</sup> Miryam Clough, *Shame, the Church, and the Regulation of Female Sexuality* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2017), 104.

First, it is imperative to intentionally meet a woman in a safe place. The initiating of a one-on-one dialogue should occur in a private place to protect the confidentiality of the woman. Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman occurred after his disciples left the scene. Even after they returned, Jesus did not share any of the conversation he had with the Samaritan woman with his disciples.

Second, removal of distractions establishes a quiet atmosphere to listen to the woman. This signals to her that she is important and what she has to share is important. This provides the opportunity to begin building rapport with the woman while listening to her presenting issues. An exploration of a deeper spiritual need that can only be filled by Jesus is critical. This requires patience, empathy and excellent listening skills.

Third, exercise discernment and timing to know when to explore shameful messages that may be positively or negatively impacting the woman. At the right time, Jesus presented a sensitive matter to the Samaritan woman who did not feel judged or condemned but safe and comfortable enough to confess and agree with the matter Jesus presented. Notice, after the Samaritan woman confessed and agreed with what Jesus already knew, Jesus did not harp on this matter but used it as an opportunity to bring salvation, healing, deliverance, forgiveness, and freedom to the Samaritan woman. The same approach should be applied with a woman who allows herself to be vulnerable and transparent.

Fourth, offering Jesus as the One who can heal a woman from shame is vital. Jesus offered himself to the Samaritan woman as the living water who gives eternal life. He met her deepest spiritual need, the need for salvation. When Jesus recognized that the Samaritan woman was ready to receive the truth, Jesus gave her the truth and presented

himself as the Truth that she needed to no longer allow anything from her past to hinder her from receiving salvation and began her journey to healing from shame.

Lastly, counseling and discipling one-on-one will create witnesses who will go out and tell others in their families, friends, and community of a man who knows everything about them. They will share their own testimonies of their encounter with Jesus who met them where they were, initiated a conversation with them, listened and heard their stories and ultimately offered himself as the one whom they can have an everlasting relationship so they can heal them from their shame.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS**

Shame is a word that has been around since the beginning of time. It is both a noun and a verb. As a noun, shame describes a painful feeling a person may experience resulting in a person believing that one has failed to meet an expectation or has engaged in wrongful behavior. As a verb, shame or shaming describes a person's actions, words or behavior inflicted upon another person leaving the recipient feeling ashamed. Although shame has been experienced by men and women, its impact upon women is experienced differently. Throughout the world, women have been shamed by society based on classism, sexism, racism and religion.

This chapter will explore the era of public shaming and public humiliation around the world and in the United States. Public shaming will be compared to methodologies and strategies employed in earlier times and in today's time. An exploration of the shaming of men and women will initially be presented, but the culminating focus will be on the shaming of women and the incongruence of experiences between men and women. The content of this writing will contain the general definition of public shaming and public humiliation. The first occurrence of shame as recorded in the Bible will be presented. Second, religious, criminal, sexual, and cultural shaming practices from the sixteenth and twentieth centuries in different countries will be explored. Lastly, the purpose of shaming, honor and shame cultures, historical shaming of women and the

impact of Enlightenment Feminism and current internet and social media shaming practices used to shame women will be examined.

### *Era of Public Shaming and Humiliation*

The biblical account in Genesis 3 has historically been viewed from the perspective of sin in terms of a guilt problem, but its focus is primarily shame. Guilt is not referenced, named or implied. Adam and Eve did not experience guilt or remorse after eating the forbidden fruit and disobeying God, instead, they experienced shame in response to their nakedness. Some supportive evidence of their shame includes them experiencing exposure and responding by covering themselves with fig leaves, hiding from God when they heard him walking in the garden of Eden during the cool of the day, blaming and experiencing fear, a failure to take ownership, passivity, powerlessness and preoccupation with appearance. It is too painful to be in the open and in an intimate relationship with God. This presents as an alienation from self, others and even God.<sup>1</sup>

Author Graham Ward identifies the first references of shame being recorded in the Bible in Genesis 2:25, “the man and his wife were naked, and were not ashamed.” Genesis 3:7 states, “the eyes of both were opened, and they knew they were naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together...and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden...And he [Adam] said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.” Adam and Eve’s eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was disobedience,

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<sup>1</sup> Oliver Crisp and Fred Sanders, *Locating Atonement: Explorations in Constructive Dogmatics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2017), 178, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/dtl/reader.action?docID=53976>.



the origin of sin, and this resulted in them feeling shame when they realized they were naked.<sup>2</sup>

Ward notes that Adam and Eve's shame was not because God exposed their sin but their "shame lies in their own eyes; their embarrassment before each other."<sup>3</sup> Further, God does not call out Adam and Eve's sin but allows them to publicly confess it. Although Adam and Eve do not repent of their sin, but instead, they hid and interrupted their fellowship with God who initiated re-engaging Adam and Eve in communication with Him; and God did not speak of being disappointed by them or their failure to achieve the level of obedience expected of them. However, God reverses the effect of their shame by not allowing Adam and Eve to hide or remain hidden. Instead, God calls them to come out of hiding and communicate with Him and understand the consequences of their disobedience. American psychobiologist Silvan Tomkins states, "Shame is both an interruption and a further impediment to communication."<sup>4</sup> Ward believes this is because shame causes a person to turn his face away as a self-imposed silence.<sup>5</sup>

Shame and humiliation has been essential to punishment throughout the course of history. There is evidence of community-driven forms of public punishment throughout Europe and North America from the early modern period to the mid-twentieth century. Shame-based punishments were used to punish and humiliate criminals, to deter criminal

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<sup>2</sup> Graham Ward, "Adam and Eve's Shame (And Ours)," *Literature and Theology* 26, no. 3 (2012): 305-306.

<sup>3</sup> Ward, "Adam and Eve's Shame (And Ours)," 308.

<sup>4</sup> Ward, "Adam and Eve's Shame (And Ours)," 312-313.

<sup>5</sup> Ward, "Adam and Eve's Shame (And Ours)," 312-313.

behavior, ostracize from or restore offenders to the community and support the authority of the judicial leaders at that time.<sup>6</sup>

Greek philosopher, Aristotle, labeled shame as an emotion that was “suitable for youth” and “womanish.”<sup>7</sup> He believed shame derived from imagining committed or intended acts or events such as doing an injustice against someone or failing to help someone when one has the ability and means to offer help. He ultimately viewed shame as “*adoxia*,” which is the Greek word meaning a loss of reputation. Aristotle believed that shame is felt before people admired, admirers or by “righteous folk” who are unwilling to forgive or pardon a person and are at its peak when the person’s shameful behavior becomes public knowledge to persons whose opinions are considered valuable.<sup>8</sup> Psychologist Sigmund Freud viewed shame as a “feminine characteristic par excellence.”<sup>9</sup>

Ideas about shame arose early in Anglo-Saxon England and the word shame first appeared in the eighth century. Its origin is Germanic and has been connected to terminology involving covering oneself that is believed to be related to nakedness and sexual matter. In early English, shame meant either the emotion that resulted from dishonor or disgrace or the anticipation of an experience that should be avoided because

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<sup>6</sup> D. Nash, *Cultures of Shame: Exploring Crime and Morality in Britain 1600-1900* (London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 26-27.

<sup>7</sup> Locke, “Shame and the Future of Feminism,” 146-162.

<sup>8</sup> David Konstan, *Shame in Ancient Greece* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 1043-1046.

<sup>9</sup> Locke, “Shame and the Future of Feminism,” 148.

of the emotional pain accompanying it.<sup>10</sup> Shame is a personal and social experience related to the social and cultural expectations and values within one's community.<sup>11</sup>

The term "slut-shaming" describes publicly exposing and shaming people based upon their "perceived sexual availability, behavior or history."<sup>12</sup> It has been used throughout the ages to promote cultural suppression of female sexuality. The Roman Republic and many other ancient cultures utilized this terminology as much as it is used today on the internet. In the Roman Republic, men controlled female sexuality. Fathers, husbands or legal guardians had authority over women. A woman's sexual behavior was limited to "conventional sanctioned partners" defined as the woman's husband. Any woman who was not a prostitute was expected to appear to be sexually virtuous by wearing a stole or tunic while a prostitute wore a toga or similar garment. Although prostitution was legal, a woman participating in prostitution was in great danger of being labeled as a "slut," prostitute, adulteress or even worse, she could be exiled or put to death if she was found to have engaged in extra-marital sexual behaviors; some women committed suicide.

Just as it is today, historically there were double standards as it was permissible for men to engage in extra-marital affairs and not receive consequences allotted to a woman. Female sexual virtue was linked to identity and religion. Comedies in the second and third century BCE reflected the importance of sexual purity and shame. Inscriptions

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<sup>10</sup> Peter N. Stearns, *Shame: A Brief History* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2017), 37, Kindle.

<sup>11</sup> Ward, "Adam and Eve's Shame (And Ours)," 307.

<sup>12</sup> Lewis Webb, "Shame Transfigured: Slut-Shaming from Rome to Cyberspace," *First Monday* 20, no. 4-6 (2015): 1-2.

on tombstones and written reflections captured on an obituary included praising a woman for her devotedness and sexual faithfulness to her husband.<sup>13</sup>

Marcus Tullius Cicero, a Roman author and member of Rome's elite political class, regularly referred to women as "sluts" in his writings. In one of his writings, *Pro Caelio*, he sought to destroy the reputation of Clodia Metelli, a socially independent woman and sister of Publius Clodius Pulcher, and a political opponent of Cicero. Clodia accused her former lover, Marcus Caelius Rufus, of attempting to poison her and this resulted in him having a court trial. Cicero was Rufus' defense attorney and he successfully secured an acquittal for Rufus after portraying Clodia as a sexually promiscuous woman. This resulted in Clodia being visibly shunned in public life.<sup>14</sup>

Christian scholars reflected on shame from the period of the early Church Fathers during the late Roman Empire, the Middle Ages and beyond. During the High and Middle Ages, from 1100 AD and forward, shaming was used to promote law and order in persons living in Europe, Portugal, Poland, Sweden and Sicily. In Europe, shaming dated back to classical Greece. In the Middle Ages and early modern time, shaming punishments came on the scene as cities began to develop. Shaming was incorporated as public penal law to serve as deterrence and reformation. European culture emphasized honor or "public fama" and joined the group structures. Shame was viewed as a strong method to alter behavior by reminding a person of community shared values and assisting them in regaining control of both their mind and bodies as learned in their childhood.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Webb, "Shame Transfigured," 2-4, Kindle.

<sup>14</sup> Webb, "Shame Transfigured," 4-6, Kindle.

<sup>15</sup> Jorg Wettlaufer, "The Shame Game," *RSA Journal*, no. 5564 (2015): 38-39.

The development of agricultural societies increased the use of shame with the goal of producing conformity in the community and to enforce intricate rules about sexual behavior. At the onset of the agricultural economies and before the rise of industrial economies and expansion of urbanization, some of the societies that used shame to control human behavior included ancient Egypt, classical Greece, China, Japan, Korea, India, Burma, Thailand, Malaysia, areas of the Middle East and East Africa, Mexico, Peru, Western Europe, the Balkans, colonial America and areas of Polynesia and Micronesia.<sup>16</sup> Early civilizations such as Babylonia, had the Hammurabic code that focused on the necessity of addressing family shame. One example of the Hammurabic code states, “If the finger has been pointed at the wife of a man because of another man, and she has not been taken lying with another man, for her husband’s sake she should throw herself in the river.”<sup>17</sup>

Public shaming Babylonian punishments would include shaving part of the accused’s head to mark them within their community. To promote acceptable behavior, a mother could publically slap her adult son who was mistreating her. In Egypt, students performing below academic expectations would be placed in public stocks to be ridiculed by the community.<sup>18</sup>

Confucius and early Confucian thinkers relied on shame to discipline and produce conformity. The teachings and writings of Confucius were known as the *Analects* in which he stated, “Lead the people with administrative injunctions and put them in their

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<sup>16</sup> Stearns, *Shame: A Brief History*, 16-17, Kindle.

<sup>17</sup> Stearns, *Shame: A Brief History*, 17-18, Kindle.

<sup>18</sup> Stearns, *Shame: A Brief History*, 18-19, Kindle.

place with penal law, and they will avoid punishment but be without a sense of shame.

Lead them with excellence and put them in their place through rites and ritual practices, and in addition to a sense of shame, they will order themselves harmoniously.”<sup>19</sup>

Confucian’s form of shame sought to maintain separate social levels with the expectation that the lower class would revere the upper class who were expected to uphold proper social behavior. Mencius, a later Confucian thinker, stated that shame applied to both bad behaviors in others and bad behavior in oneself.<sup>20</sup>

Greek authorities were more concerned with preventing the disruption of public order than the actual shameful act. Specifically, those caught in adultery prompted significant public shaming. In some communities, women caught in adultery were labelled “donkey-riders” due to being forced to stand in the public marketplace and then paraded on a donkey through the streets. Male offenders were bound and paraded around the cities for three days and the women were forced to stand for eleven days in the marketplace in a sheer tunic symbolizing nakedness and shaming. Some men were dressed in women’s clothing and subjected to “radishing” which consisted of a large vegetable being placed in the anus while locked in the stocks.<sup>21</sup>

Theologian and philosopher, Saint Augustine, differentiated between shame and guilt with the former being in response to the opinion of a group and the latter addressed sin and ruled a person’s relationship to God. When Christianity was viewed as a minority religion, theologian Tertullian, wrote that Christians need a “contempt for shame like

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<sup>19</sup> Stearns, *Shame: A Brief History*, 21, Kindle.

<sup>20</sup> Stearns, *Shame: A Brief History*, 22, Kindle.

<sup>21</sup> Stearns, *Shame: A Brief History*, 26, Kindle.

hermits who resisted society rules to live in devotion to God.”<sup>22</sup> The biblical account of the Fall of Adam and Eve and throughout humanity provides an assumption that shame inflicts suffering and should be a response to sin but instead serves as a crucial emotion to correcting low morality among humanity and is the foundation for redemption. Shame should not only be viewed as social disapproval but the basis for repentance and as in Catholicism, produce confession. In book four, *The City of God*, Augustine emphasized shame being the primary response to sexual indecency while Tertullian and other earlier scholars expanded shame’s role to include protecting the sacredness of virginity.<sup>23</sup>

Shame impacted religious life and the community enforcement carried out by admonition from the congregation. In some religious communities, this weighed more than legal sanctions especially in New England. Congregant Temperance Baldwin was called out and admonished in front of a church congregation for being a sinner.<sup>24</sup> She was urged to “confess” and “take shame unto her face.” If it appeared that shame was not willingly and visibly expressed, the person’s confession was futile, and the original charge of sin stood. Even worse, a person could be excommunicated from the church if the admonition did not produce expected results.<sup>25</sup> Shame is both a physiological and emotional penalty for sin. Humiliation is retribution and a reversal of pride that is the source of sin.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Stearns, *Shame: A Brief History*, 37-38, Kindle.

<sup>23</sup> Stearns, *Shame: A Brief History*, 37-38, Kindle.

<sup>24</sup> Stearns, *Shame: A Brief History*, 39, Kindle.

<sup>25</sup> Harré Rom, *The Emotions: Social, Cultural and Biological Dimensions* (London, UK: Sage Publication, 2000), 77.

<sup>26</sup> Ward, “Adam and Eve’s Sin (And Ours),” 308.

Western Europe used shaming tactics such as a special flute for bad musicians, crowns for adulterers, unqualified medical persons were seated backwards on animals and paraded throughout the city, prostitutes wore barrels as they were forced to march, perjurers sat on a wooden horse and bigamist were locked in a cage for one hour in the marketplace with a large sign stating the offense. In Europe, thieves' hands were cut off, sexual offenders wore clothes or a letter to identify their status. In Rome, public whipping was incorporated as well as public hanging and beheading.<sup>27</sup>

Secular penal laws mimicked church laws. During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the constitution included the pillory or stocks which were used for public humiliation in the marketplace for misdemeanors or sins committed in public. Great emphasis was placed on perjury, fraud, adultery, blasphemy and theft. For example, a baker was dunked into mud for baking bread that was incorrectly sized. A person selling fish would be placed in the pillory if they sold rotten fish. However, adultery was the most prominent behavior that called for public shaming as a punishment and deterrent. The community interpreted this as failed moral behavior and expected the shamed person to identify with the values and norms established by the community. The pillory or stocks were used to bring the alleged offender to give a public confession in the presence of congregants, force punitive shame and produce forgiveness from the group and reconciliation with the community. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, iron collars were introduced as instruments of public shame. Today, social media on the

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<sup>27</sup> Stearns, *Shame: A Brief History*, 23-28, Kindle.



internet has replaced the pillory, stocks and iron collars in the public shaming of people in the marketplace.<sup>28</sup>

Honor and shame cultures and societies have been in existence throughout the world. Islamic communities indulged in punitive parades in which the accused wore a hat, had a shaved head or a face covered in soot. At times, the accused was seated backwards on a donkey and paraded through the community.<sup>29</sup>

Moral philosopher, John Rawls, stated that shame “implies an especially intimate connection...with those upon whom we depend to confirm the sense of our own worth.”<sup>30</sup> Structural anthropologists present the Mediterranean region as an honor and shame culture when explaining their social patterns. Their belief is that “honor and shame are reciprocal moral values representing primordial integration of individuals to ‘group.’ They reflect, respectively, the conferral of public esteem upon the person and the sensitivity to public opinion upon which the former depends.”<sup>31</sup> Honor is viewed as a male value that is a male public honor measured by shame and dependent upon the chastity of the woman associated with him.

Anthropologist and author, Carol Delaney, conducted anthropological research in Turkey where honor and shame was associated with procreation. A male’s value is determined by society’s perception of his ability to reproduce and secure the paternity of the child as his. This has resulted in high anxiety among men in the community because their honor and social status is contingent upon the paternity results. The female is

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<sup>28</sup> Wettlaufer, “The Shame Game,” 39.

<sup>29</sup> Stearns, *Shame: A Brief History*, 23-27, Kindle.

<sup>30</sup> Peter A. French, “Honor, Shame, and Identity,” *Public Affairs Quarterly* 16, no. 1 (2002): 6.

<sup>31</sup> French, “Honor, Shame, and Identity,” 6.

compared to a field that is considered the property of her husband who is the only one with rights to sow in his field.<sup>32</sup>

Delaney further states that, “Shame is an inevitable part of being female.”<sup>33</sup> The only honor available to a woman is her being fully aware of her inherent shamefulness and behaving per expectations. However, she has the power to shame her husband based on her sexual behavior. The application of the ancient pollution doctrine is used to explain the transference of the wife’s sexual promiscuity to her husband being shamed. A woman who has been sexually intimate with any man other than her husband is classified as physically polluted and her husband’s honor is stained.<sup>34</sup>

Public shaming of women was socially acceptable and supported by laws and orders. It served to separate “good” women from “bad” women. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Puritan colonists and English immigrants arrived in North America with their legal, moral and religious codes of conduct that greatly restricted women’s conduct. Colonial women were charged with adultery, gossip, slander, immorality, immodesty, bastardy, and witchcraft. Womanhood was shameful due to women being an offspring of Eve who was viewed as the “original sinner and temptress.”<sup>35</sup> For lesser charges, women were excommunicated from the church resulting in no regular contact with other women. Sadly, women then engaged in what many

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<sup>32</sup> French, “Honor, Shame, and Identity,” 6-7.

<sup>33</sup> French, “Honor, Shame, and Identity,” 6-7.

<sup>34</sup> French, “Honor, Shame, and Identity,” 6-7.

<sup>35</sup> Bonnie Morris, “A Separate Violence: The Politics of Shaming,” *NWSA Journal* 4, no. 2 (1992): 203.

women do today; they strategically ostracized other women. However, if they overindulged in this behavior, they could be publicly shamed with a whipping.<sup>36</sup>

As a deterrent from unacceptable behavior, colonies and parishes created public punishments such as public whippings, ducking, and scolding to humiliate female offenders. Women were expected to be “modest.” Nathaniel Hawthorne’s, *The Scarlet Letter*, paints a vivid picture of public shaming and humiliation tactics used in colonial America. The main character, Hester Prynne, was publically shamed and humiliated after being forced to wear a large letter “A” on her chest after having a child out of wedlock.<sup>37</sup>

Women were associated with being in the private sector as it related to the home. Men were the financial means of support, legally permitted to own property and could pay fines rather than serve prison time to avoid public whippings for shameful offenses. Since a woman did not have joint ownership of her husband’s money, she could not escape physical public shaming punishments due to not having the money to pay fines.<sup>38</sup>

For women in the elite class, an allegation of immorality of sinful behavior, meant being publicly shamed and being placed in a lower-class status in the community, socially black-balled and the termination of any marriage potentials. This served as a harsh blow due to marriage being the only escape from a hostile community, family or workplace. Further, it severed friendships between women who could not risk helping or being associated with a woman accused of breaking the moral and religious codes.

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<sup>36</sup> Morris, “A Separate Violence,” 203.

<sup>37</sup> Paul Ziel, “Eighteenth Century Public Humiliation Penalties in Twenty-First Century America: The ‘Shameful’ Return of ‘Scarlet Letter’ Punishments in U.S. v. Gementera,” *Brigham Young University Journal of Public Law* 9, no. 2 (2005): 499.

<sup>38</sup> Ziel, “Eighteenth Century Public Humiliation Penalties in Twenty-First Century America,” 499.

Women strived to maintain a “good” reputation to survive religious cultures that permitted the public shaming and punishment of women.<sup>39</sup>

Shame is not only based upon the views of society, but it is also a delayed emotion of how a person, who is categorized as a “detached observer,” thinks he or she should have behaved in a situation. Time may lapse between the person’s behavior and the person becoming aware of the way others perceive her versus how she views herself. As it related to a woman, rather than the community shaming her, she assigned shame to herself.<sup>40</sup>

Although Black female slaves were subjected to sexual abuse by their White masters, they were shamed by the community who blamed them for circumstance they had no control. Harriet A. Jacobs, a former slave who escaped the clutches of her White master, Dr. Norcom, wrote a book, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, in which she confesses “with sorrow and shame” to intentionally having sexual intercourse and becoming pregnant with two children by a White lawyer, Samuel Tredwell Sawyer. She confesses to engaging in sexual intercourse with Sawyer out of her desperation to escape the chronic sexual advances of her master, Dr. Norcom. She had two children by Sawyer who purchased the two children from Dr. Norcom after Harriet ran away and became a fugitive. She later reunited with Sawyer and her children. Harriet Jacobs sought to publicly expose the sexual victimization many Black female slaves endured from their masters.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Ziel, “Eighteenth Century Public Humiliation Penalties in Twenty-First Century America,” 499.

<sup>40</sup> French, “Honor, Shame, and Identity,” 10.

<sup>41</sup> Harriet A. Jacobs and Lydia Maria Francis-Child, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Written by Herself* (Boston, MA: self-published), 939-940.

In the late eighteenth century, the Enlightenment Period and the birth of Enlightenment Feminism, began to take root in Western culture and public leaders began to reconsider the importance of human dignity.<sup>42</sup> It was known as the intellectual movement and stressed reason and science instead of superstition and faith and promoted new ideals pertaining to equality and freedom that changed Europe and North America. French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau declared women to be weaker and less rational than men by nature and her sole purpose is to be a wife and mother. Philosophers Denis Diderot, Marquis de Condorcet, Thomas Hobbes and Jeremy Bentham publicly recognized women's intellectual abilities and supported their goal of gender equality.<sup>43</sup>

However, the reappearance of public shaming resurfaced but in a different manner. Public shaming has shifted from physical methodologies to social networking methodologies such as cyberbullying. Women have been the primary targets of internet and social media shaming and abuse. Over the past few years, women have experienced online abuse in disproportionate numbers to men. In 2017, Pew Research Center conducted a survey that revealed men experienced name calling and physical threats online at a higher rate. However, women were more likely to experience severe sexual harassment online. Twenty-one percent of women aged eighteen to twenty-nine reported being sexually harassed online. This number represented twice that of their male counterparts in the same age range. The research further revealed that up to ninety percent of "revenge porn" victims are women and this number continues to increase. A poll conducted in 2017 by Amnesty International IPSOS MORI revealed that women are

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<sup>42</sup> Stearns, *Shame: A Brief History*, 42, Kindle.

<sup>43</sup> Hannah McCann and D. K. Publishing, *The Feminism Book* (New York, NY: Penguin Random House, 2019), 30.

much more likely to experience adverse psychological effects caused by online harassment.<sup>44</sup>

In October 2017, female actress Alyssa Milano launched the ‘#MeToo’ campaign using social media to raise awareness of sexual harassment and sexual assault after she made numerous allegations of sexual misconduct against film producer Harvey Weinstein. The ‘#MeToo’ campaign aided in removing the “blanket of shame” and encouraging people to share their personal experiences. It exposed the frequency of sexual misconduct within relationships of power and the impact sexual misconduct has on victims.<sup>45</sup>

Some parents have elected to shame their children on social media by posting their punishments. An Ohio mother punished her daughter on social media after her daughter spoke disrespectfully to her in front of her friends. She changed her daughter’s Facebook profile picture to a picture of her daughter with a red “X” over her mouth and a caption next to the picture saying, “I do not know how to keep [my mouth] shut. I am no longer allowed on Facebook or my phone. Please ask why.”<sup>46</sup> She mandated her daughter answer every Facebook inquiry about the reason she was on punishment. The Ohio mother remarked that she was adapting her parental disciplinary style to fit the times.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Debbie Ging and Eugenia Siapera, “Special Issue on Online Misogyny,” *Feminist Media Studies* 18, no. 4 (April 2018): 515, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2018.1447345>.

<sup>45</sup> Tatjana Hornle, “#MeToo – Implications for Criminal Law?” *Bergen Journal of Criminal Law and Criminal Justice* 6, no. 2 (2018): 115-116.

<sup>46</sup> Lauren M. Goldman, “Trending Now: The Use of Social Media Websites in Public Shaming Punishments,” *American Criminal Law Review* 52, no. 2 (2015): 415-ii.

<sup>47</sup> Goldman, “Trending Now,” 415-ii.

Parenting expert, Dr. Michelle Borba, and author of *Unselfie: Why Empathetic Kids Succeed in Our All-About-Me World*, posits that a decrease in empathy has cultivated a culture ripe for online attacks. Research conducted over the years at the University of Michigan on incoming college freshmen's empathy found a forty percent decline in empathy and a fifty-eight percent increase in narcissism over the past three decades. The lack of empathy prevents a person from seeing the other person on the other side of the computer screen as someone who deserves compassion. Instead, depersonalization is occurring. For many people, physical distance makes it easy to engage in cyber shaming because they do not have to be concerned with a face-to-face encounter with the person being shamed.<sup>48</sup>

### Summary

The era of public shaming and public humiliation traces its roots back to biblical times in which Adam and Eve were the first people identified to experience shame because of their disobedience to God. Sin resulted in their eyes being opened, their nakedness uncovered and their attempt to hide in shame from God and from one another. However, God did not publicly shame Adam and Eve but offered them the opportunity to confess their sins, which God, in turn, provided covering for their nakedness.

In most instances, the morals, values, and expectations within the religious community and church significantly impacted the secular laws and criminal punishment around the world and in the United States. The motive behind shaming was to maintain order, compliance and deter people from engaging in behavior that the community

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<sup>48</sup> Sue Scheff, Melissa Schorr, and Monica S. Lewinsky, *Shame Nation: The Global Epidemic of Online Hate* (Naperville: IL: Sourcebooks, Inc., 2018), 227.

deemed inappropriate and unacceptable. Unfortunately, women were and still are the primary target and recipient of public shaming.

Public shaming and public humiliation, historically, has been displayed in churches to bring women to conformity. Traditions, norms and expectations, whether spoken or unspoken, were crafted. Dress codes, marital status, sexual history, classism, sexism, and labeling, not with a “Scarlet Letter,” but with a scarring label are attached to women based on the church and the community’s perception of the woman failing to meet their standards. Sadly, women are not only shamed by men but also other women. This serves as a double-edge sword that inflicts injury.

The Bible clearly states that there is nothing new under the sun. Just as the message of the gospel never changes but the methodology of the way it is shared changes. Therefore, this applies to public shaming and humiliation that has never changed and has existed since the beginning of time evolving from pillories, stocks, whippings, ostracizing and excommunication from the church. Now, the community engages in cyberbullying, bullying in person and shaming messages posted on the internet, social media, and via text messages.

The era of public shaming and public humiliation serves to inform my doctoral ministry project on the importance of helping women to heal from shame whether it is self-imposed or society-imposed. The original methodology and approach demonstrated by God as He initiated calling Adam and Eve out of hiding, providing covering and an opportunity for them to confess their sin and disobedience was motivated by His love and desire to be in fellowship and relationship with humanity. This methodology and approach was also demonstrated by Jesus when He initiated the conversation with the



Samaritan woman at the well in John chapter four. Jesus invited her to come out of hiding from her possible shameful past and offered her the opportunity to confess the content of her shame and receive freedom from her shame.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Shame is a painful emotion that can either be debilitating or motivating.

Debilitating shame will cause a woman to hide from herself, others and God. Motivating shame will cause a woman to seek a remedy to alleviate the pain caused by shame. In both circumstances, God pursues a relationship with a woman suffering and a woman seeking. The atoning death of His son Jesus Christ provides healing for both.

The shame women experience may stem from their own negative self-talk and negative messages received from society. Their shame can result from being victims of traumatic and abusive circumstances or failing to meet the expectations of themselves, others or God. Unfortunately, many women are re-victimized by the church when they muster up enough courage and strength to disclose their shameful experiences but only to be viewed with eyes of judgment and disapproval by people, they hoped to be able to trust and confide in.

Theologian, Lewis B. Smedes, identifies the church as a place where shame is fed and bred. People enter burdened with unhealthy shame and oftentimes their burden becomes heavier. “Unhealthy shame blocks their spiritual arteries and prevents grace from penetrating.”<sup>1</sup> When grace is heard, it is typically in the form of judgement. Smedes

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<sup>1</sup> Lewis B. Smedes, *Shame and Grace: Healing the Shame We Don't Deserve* (San Francisco, CA: Harper San Francisco, 1993), 76-78.

describes three voices that feed a person's shame: (1) The voice of duty in which God mandates a person be perfect as Himself to be accepted by Him; (2) The voice of failure in which the person sees themselves as flawed, less than imperfect and a completely unacceptable human being; and (3) The voice of grace in which a person can receive God's forgiveness for failure.<sup>2</sup>

Alienation or disconnection from God was defined as a "fear-of-the-Lord" and believed to be a strong predictor of both shame and guilt. People who had a "fear-of-the-Lord" and believed they were not living up to God's expectations were more likely to engage in shame-based behaviors. They would have higher levels of shame and guilt because they viewed themselves as inherently bad.<sup>3</sup> "Spirituality denotes a sense of forgiveness of the self when mistakes are made and a sense that one can be forgiven, forgive oneself, and move forward. Those who feel alienated, disconnected, and fearful of God may feel more unworthy and more shame over behaviors considered unacceptable."<sup>4</sup>

Many churches and communities are overflowing with women who are hiding in hopes of their shameful experiences never being uncovered. Theologian and author, Dr. Andrew Parks, states that in churches, there are many victims of brokenness, sexual abuse, homophobia, racial discrimination and exploitation. To Jesus, releasing people from their pain was more urgent than addressing their sin. Instead of demanding they

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<sup>2</sup> Smedes, *Shame and Grace*, 76-78.

<sup>3</sup> Kelly M. Murray, Joseph W. Ciarrocchi, and Nichole A. Murray-Swank, "Spirituality, Religiosity, Shame and Guilt as Predictors of Sexual Attitude," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 35, no. 3 (2007): 231, <https://eds.b.ebscohost.com.nocdbpoxy.xavier.edu/eds/pdfviewer>.

<sup>4</sup> Murray, Ciarrocchi, and Murray-Swank, "Spirituality, Religiosity, Shame and Guilt as Predictors of Sexual Attitude," 231.

repent of their sins, Jesus would offer words of encouragement by saying, “Stand up, take your mat of han and go home so they could be released of false sin-consciousness.”<sup>5</sup>

Many women fear more shame will be piled upon them from church congregants and leaders. Inside and outside of the church, women contemplate if the church is a safe place and refuge to disclose their shame and receive relief for their tormented souls. Some are even too ashamed to come to God. Women struggling with shame struggle with questions such as: Where can I go? What can I do? Who can I go to? Feminist Theology and Atonement Theology speak to these issues by presenting God as the One who provides covering of humanity’s shame.

Feminist Theology was birthed out of efforts to conceptualize God and the Bible to include gender equality. During the nineteenth century in the United States, Elizabeth Cady Stanton was an abolitionist and one of the founders of the “first wave” women’s rights movement that sought to change laws that classified women as subordinate to men and to expand civil rights to include both men and women. She later decided that women would not be able to gain political and economic opportunities unless changes occurred in traditional Christianity’s beliefs that God created women subordinate to men. She along with numerous women theologians completed the project of the *Women’s Bible* to challenge the interpretation of biblical passages used to justify women being classified as subordinate. However, Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s theological project was rejected by the American public and she was censored by the women’s suffrage organization.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Andrew Sung Park, *From Hurt to Healing: A Theology of the Wounded* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2004), 26-27.

<sup>6</sup> Miguel A. de la Torre, *Handbook of U.S. Theologies of Liberation* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2004), 249.

During the 1960's a "second wave" women's rights movement arose to bring equal rights to women. The United States government established laws to foster equality between men and women. Yet, Christian organizations continued to promote patriarchal values. Feminist Mary Daly called for women to develop new Christian views and move beyond Christianity in an effort to move beyond patriarchy. However, Feminist Theologians Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, Rosemary Radford Ruether, Letty Russell, and Phyllis Trible viewed Christianity as compatible with feminism. They further posited that it had a positive effect on the women's liberation movement and was beneficial in impacting American Christian's views on gender. Feminist Theologians posited that it is against God's will for women to be classified as subordinate because of their gender. They requested Christians examine the Bible, theology and religious organizations with this lens. Feminist theologians pointed out scripture and Christian history promoting total gender equality while emphasizing patriarchal accounts of Christianity have been perverted by the "sin of sexism". Their biblical interpretation is based on the following three principles: 1) the life and message of Jesus provide the basic criteria by which the rest of the Bible (and the entire Christian tradition) can be evaluated. 2) The social and political impact of biblical interpretation on women (and others) must be taken seriously. If a particular biblical interpretation perpetuates social injustices, including social injustices against women, then it is not seen as an interpretation reflecting the "divine." 3) It is impossible to evaluate the Christian tradition or biblical texts from an objective or neutral standpoint. One either interprets scripture with a primary commitment to social

justice, or one does not. Those who seek “objective” approaches to scripture are often confusing objectivity with their own unexamined worldviews.<sup>7</sup>

Atonement Theology or “theories of the atonement” explores how salvation is conceived and connected with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.<sup>8</sup> It is incorporated in Christian Theology known as soteriology which examines what constitutes salvation and how salvation has been attained. The word “atonement” dates back to 1526 when the English writer William Tyndale was assigned the task of translating the New Testament into English that had no word which meant “reconciliation.” Tyndale invented the word “at-one-ment” which came to mean “the benefits which Jesus Christ brings to believers through His death upon the cross.”<sup>9</sup> Theologians tend to refer to “the doctrine of the work of Christ” as a modern-day reference to atonement.

There are four approaches to interpreting the death of Jesus Christ that provide intellectual frameworks of understanding its significance:

1. Approaches that build on the Old Testament’s cultic worship, especially sacrifice, as a way of enabling people to enter the presence of God. Christ is often interpreted as both the sinless High Priest and the perfect sacrificial offering, allowing impurities to be cleansed so that people can draw close to God.
2. Models of the atonement that see Christ’s death as a “satisfaction,” through which Christ paid the penalty of sin.

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<sup>7</sup> de la Torre, *Handbook of U.S. Theologies of Liberation*, 249-251.

<sup>8</sup> Allister E. McGrath, *The Christian Theology Reader*, 5th ed. (Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2017), 282.

<sup>9</sup> McGrath, *The Christian Theology Reader*, 282.

3. Approaches which interpret the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as victory over sin, death, and Satan liberating believers from their influence and presence.
4. Models of the atonement that foreground the theme of love, interpreting the incarnation and atonement as a demonstration of God's commitment to humanity.<sup>10</sup>

The four approaches are consistent, yet they still require additional information to expound upon the importance of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Additionally, all four collectively provide substance to atonement. Jesus Christ's atonement allows one to come into the presence of God, satisfies the penalty of sin, provides liberty from and victory over sin, death and the enemy and demonstrates God's unconditional love for humanity.

This chapter will begin by discussing feminist theologians such as Yolanda Dreyer, Rosemary Radford Ruether and Mary Daly by demonstrating their work, how they are similar, different, and highlighting their possible contributions as it relates to shame. Then it will highlight atonement theologians such as Robin Stockitt and Brian Binau and the methods they use to introduce how shame is addressed within this theological theme. Dreyer addresses how women's life experiences in a male dominated society impact their ability to be authentic, even before God. Rosemary Radford Ruether and Mary Daly present the need for women to be liberated from the deprivation of power and privileges. These feminist theologians hold similar views regarding traditional Christianity negatively impacting women's identity and role in the community based on biblical interpretation in a patriarchal and male dominated society. However, they differ

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<sup>10</sup> McGrath, *The Christian Theology Reader*, 282.

in their views of the means of liberation. Dreyer posits that woman's liberation is connected to self-perception; whereas Ruether and Daly believe Jesus Christ is the liberator and Redeemer of women but differ on whether or not to embrace or reject His masculinity. Atonement theologians, Robin Stockitt and Brian Binau present similarities and differences in the view of humanity's need for reconciliation. Both propose that humankind can only become completely oneself in relationship with another and ultimately this relationship is with Jesus Christ.

Feminist theologian, Yolanda Dreyer argues that women's experiences have resulted in different approaches to "knowing" in Feminist Theology. She believes that spirituality is foundational in determining what is important in a person's life. A person's core meaning is connected to self-perception regarding how one sees oneself. This is connected to life orientation which is where one is in the world, and ultimately connected to one's identity in the world. Spirituality is inclusive of all dimensions of life and determines one's identity as an authentic person in God's presence.

Dreyer poses the question of whether women can be authentic in the presence of God. What is problematic for women is their lack of opportunity to become autonomous because they are in a male-dominated patriarchal world. Role restrictions reduce a woman discovering her true identity. Dreyer believes that Christianity has contributed to women's restrictions due to women being socialized to accept negative images attributed to them by others such as weak, passive, submissive, evil, wild, virgin, or slut which are internalized within women and deters them from having a meaningful life.<sup>11</sup> Dreyer points out the importance of spirituality in a woman's life but her argument of a woman's

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<sup>11</sup> Yolanda Dreyer, "Women's Spirituality and Feminist Theology: A Hermeneutic of Suspicion Applied to 'Patriarchal Marriage,'" *HTS Teologiese Studies* 67, no. 2 (2011).



core meaning being centered on her self-perception appears to conflict with one's authentic identity being found in the presence of God. Traditional Christianity has placed restrictions on women's roles based on stereotypical roles assigned by a male-dominated society.

Feminist theologian, Carolyn Osiek recognizes the dire need for biblical interpretation that will liberate women in the faith community from stereotypical roles assigned by traditional Christianity. To initiate this change, Osiek proposes three observations. First, the Bible has been used as an instrument of abuse of power and the church should discontinue this practice. Second, biblical hermeneutics should happen in the context of interaction of experiences within the faith community. Lastly, biblical texts have their origins in traditions which determine how people perceive their reality in light of a specific biblical passage as it relates to the specific circumstances one is living in at that time.

Contemporary hermeneutics should equally focus on experience and theory. For women, this would mean that their stories and lives can contribute to the biblical text. Osiek further proposes that marriage should be interpreted from a hermeneutic of suspicion that entails reading behind the context to include its origins and in front of the context to include the experience one brings to it. Feminist hermeneutics has concluded that the strong connection between sexuality and religion is outdated. It has also determined that women being victimized in marriage is a patriarchal institutional belief system. Fixed traditions impact social roles and have traditionally been viewed as part of God's creation when they are actually social constructs. Ultimately, the vision of feminist hermeneutics will come to fruition when all human beings are treated equally and have

equal opportunity to be who God created them to be and empower them to live authentic lives in God's presence.<sup>12</sup>

Some feminist theologians are challenged with understanding how a male Savior can be the Savior of women. Feminist liberation theologian, Rosemary Radford Ruether uses theologian Paul Tillich's concept of Christ as the "new being" and rejects the classical Christology of Chalcedon. In its place, she presents Jesus as a first-century feminist liberator who denounces power and privileges that deprive others. Ruether is quoted saying, "Once the mythology about Jesus as Messiah or divine Logos, with its traditional masculine imagery is stripped off, the Jesus of the synoptic Gospels can be recognized as a figure remarkably compatible with feminism."<sup>13</sup> The masculinity of Jesus as being problematic is also shared by many feminist theologians who concluded that Jesus Christ's masculinity hinders women from believing that He can liberate them.

Feminist theologian Mary Daly and women in the Women's Spirituality Movement invigorated women to reject Christ as Savior and Redeemer because of traditional Christianity's identification of Christ as masculine. Instead, she encouraged them to pursue a 'female divinity and messianic symbol.'<sup>14</sup> This resulted in thousands of women leaving the church and seeking other options.

Although Daly and other feminist theologians view Jesus' masculinity as a hindrance, it seems to be of uttermost importance to have a masculine Jesus embrace

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<sup>12</sup> Dreyer, "Women's Spirituality and Feminist Theology," 67.

<sup>13</sup> Roger E. Olson, *The Journey of Modern Theology: from Reconstruction to Deconstruction* (Downers, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013), 542.

<sup>14</sup> Rosemary Radford Ruether, "Feminism and Christology: Can a Male Savior Help a Woman?" *To Change the World: Christology and Cultural Criticism* (London, UK: SCM, 1981), 45-56, <https://archive.org/details/tochangeworldchr0000ruet/page/n45/mode/1up>.

women in their totality rather than replace His masculinity with female symbolism for the sake of identification with women. If a patriarchal society has held women captive to subservient positions, then a male Savior would be necessary to overturn this belief and restore women to equality with men. However, Daly examines three options to support her argument.

1. The Imperial Christ is a construct of both Hebrew messianic and Greek philosophy. The messianic symbol is depicted in the book of Zechariah when the Messiah is portrayed as a warrior-king who overthrows an enemy nation and establishes and gives power to Israel, the oppressed nation. God will obtain revenge against Israel's oppressors.
2. The androgynous Christ portrays Christ as one who unifies males and females. As stated by the Apostle Paul, there is neither male nor female. Hence, a masculine Christ is not acceptable but one who is able to represent both male and female. Traditionally, women were viewed as the lower element and were expected to unite with the male who was viewed as the higher element. As we moved into the nineteenth century, the woman became known as "the better half" and took on redemptive qualities. This pointed to a future messianic world in which the world will become more peaceful because of women rather than filled with war and conflict.
3. The Prophetic Iconoclastic Christ is being promoted by liberation theologies in which Christ becomes the liberator of those who are being oppressed. The leaders of society are blind to the gospel and hypocrites while the outcasts of society are social and moral outcasts, prostitutes, publicans and Samaritans but they can hear

Christ's gospel that now turns the social order upside down in which the first becomes last and the last becomes first. Jesus renounces statuses of the privileged and unprivileged and pursues outcast women who have been oppressed. For example, Jesus responds authentically to the Syro-Phoenician woman, widow, and prostitute rather than with male dominance. This is the vision for the future of women liberated by Jesus.<sup>15</sup>

Ruether states that Christology has been a doctrine traditionally used against women and cites theologian Thomas Aquinas presenting the male as the generic sex of humanity representing the fullness of human potential. This view portrays women as subservient to the male even before the fall of Adam and Eve. Ruether notes Aquinas determining women to be physically, morally and mentally defective due to their 'defective nature' constituting them to be placed in a subservient role in social order. As a result, the incarnation of the logos of God was in male form not by sheer accident but an ontological necessity. Unlike the female, the male represents the wholeness of human nature in himself, as the head of the woman and is the fullness of the image of God. A woman cannot hold the position of headship in society or in the church and her 'defectiveness' prevents her from being ordained in the church as only a male can represent Christ.

However, Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza describes Jesus' *basileia*, kingdom, as one that is inclusive wholeness pictured at his table community with the poor, sinners, tax collectors and prostitutes. Jesus' teaching and healing miracles calls for a discipleship of equality and liberation from a patriarchal system. His use of God's name as father is not for the purpose of legitimizing a patriarchal system but to honor authority. Jesus paints a

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<sup>15</sup> Ruether, "Feminism and Christology," 45-56.

feminist vision of the kingdom that “calls all women to wholeness and selfhood, as well as to solidarity with these women who are the impoverished, the maimed, and the outcast of society and church.”<sup>16</sup> This vision is classified as the feminist historical reconstruction that identifies Jesus as the “woman-identified man” who called forth a community of the discipleships of equals.<sup>17</sup>

Atonement Theology further provides insight into women’s liberation from shame. A negative view of shame presents an opportunity to drive women away from their true selves, others and Jesus Christ as they will be prone to seek isolation and hiding. On the contrary, a positive view of shame presents the opportunity to drive women out of isolation and hiding to seek Jesus Christ as their liberator. Shame is a painful feeling of being a mistake and experiencing oneself as inherently flawed at the core of one’s being. Unlike guilt, shame does not allow for retribution or atonement because it is connected to identity not a behavioral infraction.<sup>18</sup> However, God’s provision of Jesus Christ gives women suffering from shame the opportunity to enter into relationship with Him and be liberated from the negative effects of shame, no longer hide and begin a journey to living with a new identity in Jesus Christ.

In his book, *Restoring the Shamed: Toward a Theology of Shame*, Robin Stockitt revisits the account of Adam and Eve in (Gen. 2:18) which God declares that it is not good for man to be alone. This suggests that for the human self to be fully realized

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<sup>16</sup> Elizabeth A. Johnson, *The Strength of Her Witness: Jesus Christ in the Global Voices of Women* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2016), chapter 4, <http://web.b.ebscohost.com.dtl.idm.oclc.org/ehost/ebookviewer>.

<sup>17</sup> Johnson, *The Strength of Her Witness*, chapter 4.

<sup>18</sup> Jill McNish and Richard L. Dayringer, *Transforming Shame: A Pastoral Response* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2009), 23.

requires the presence of ‘another.’ Adam recognizes that Eve is made of the same substance as himself; yet she is different but not his competitor. Adam and Eve’s completion of one another is a theology assertion of the structure of the self and points to humankind as relational beings who were innocent prior to the temptation of the serpent. Stockitt references (Gen. 2:25) in which Adam and Eve were both naked before one another and were not ashamed. The Hebrew word, “bôsh,” is used 128 times in the Old Testament. It is used in reference to Adam and Eve as husband and wife; and they were not ashamed of their nakedness in the presence of one another and before God without covering or any desire to hide. This suggests that shamelessness is the original state of who we are.<sup>19</sup>

Stockitt references philosopher and theologian Paul Ricoeur’s three forms of “others” that we know. The first is our relationship with ourselves; our bodies that help us to experience our surroundings. The second is our relationship with others who in a relationship affect one another. “The selfhood of oneself implies otherness to such an intimate degree that one cannot be thought of without the other.”<sup>20</sup> This is the opposite of the definition of shame. Stockitt quotes theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer,

Shame only exists because of the knowledge of the division of man . . . Shame is the expression of the fact that we no longer accept the other person as a gift from God . . . When one accepts the other as the companion given to him by God, where he is content with understanding himself as beginning from and ending in the other and in belonging to him, man is not ashamed. In the unity of unbroken obedience man is naked in the presence of man, uncovered, revealing both body and soul, and yet is not ashamed. Shame only comes into existence in the world of division.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Robin Stockitt, *Restoring the Shamed: Towards a Theology of Shame* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2012), 278-296, Kindle.

<sup>20</sup> Stockitt, *Restoring the Shamed*, 302-319, Kindle.

<sup>21</sup> Stockitt, *Restoring the Shamed*, 319-326, Kindle.

Stockitt refers to the third “otherness” as the wholly Other, God, who invites us to be in relationship and fellowship with Him. He identifies shame and division arriving on the scene with Adam and Eve in the form of to “know” or “knowing” producing an urgency to hide after they sinned against God.<sup>22</sup>

Adam and Eve’s “opening of their eyes” and seeing their nakedness implies several consequences. First, shame is the cost of the loss of fellowship between God the Creator and humankind. This results in humankind navigating through the world attempting to judge what is good and evil, but only to discover that humankind is not able to accomplish this in human strength. Adam and Eve covering themselves is an indicator of shame, their acknowledgment of their presence before one another and their fear of judgement. Their broken fellowship with God produces self-awareness. Humankind is made in the image of the triune God and is personal at the core and suggests that humans are subjects rather than objects. However, shame turns the self into an object. One begins to determine his identity in relation to another resulting in internal thoughts such as “What does the other think?” instead of “What do I think?” Without a loving relationship and fellowship with God, humankind is not able to live life as desired. However, shame can be viewed from a positive angle in that humankind bears the image of the triune God (*imago Dei*) and can only succeed in relationships. Hence, shame is the consequential result of the triune God attempting to live in humanity. This suggests that God is at work in the lives of humanity seeking to restore relationship and fellowship with humanity and to grant opportunity for an abundant life.

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<sup>22</sup> Stockitt, *Restoring the Shamed*, 326-339, Kindle.

In Genesis 3:8-11, God finds the couple hiding behind a tree because they are overwhelmed with shame and guilt and too ashamed to come out. The Hebrew text describes Adam and Eve's hiding to mean that the couple turned their face away from God. This resulted in Adam and Eve being put out of the Garden of Eden and their communion with God ceasing. Additionally, Genesis 3:9-24 portrays a new distrust in Adam and Eve's relationship and fellowship with one another as they begin to cast blame for their disobedience exclusive of themselves. Shame, guilt and sin are natural consequences of turning away from God. Before the fall, Adam and Eve had a sense of belonging. However, Genesis chapter three shows God looking for them just as Jesus came seeking to save the lost. Jesus is depicted as the One who seeks out those who have been exiled personally and from their community.<sup>23</sup>

Stockitt shares the account of the woman caught in adultery and publicly paraded to expose her shame. He notes that the focus should not be on the words Jesus spoke, but on his actions and position – bending down. Jesus bent down lower than the woman which shifted the focus off the woman being publicly shamed. His posture beneath the woman suggests He positioned Himself to remove her shame but not minimize her guilt.

Stockitt returns to Adam and Eve's turning away from the face of God to drive home the point that healing from shame involves the face of God. Only by looking into the "face" (pānîm) of God can humankind find healing from shame. Jesus' crucifixion describes Him as turning His face to God who strengthened Jesus to be vindicated from

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<sup>23</sup> Radford, "Feminism and Christology," 45-56.



the shame He endured on the cross. The resurrection of Jesus removed shame and replaced it with glory and honor.<sup>24</sup>

In the Old Testament, women were shamed by what was termed “uncleanness” and “impurity” associated with women’s sexuality. Additionally, in the New Testament, the passage of scripture found in Mark 5:27-34 gives an account of the woman with the issue of blood for twelve years as an example of a woman bound by Levitical law. The shame of her “uncleanness” hindered her from approaching Jesus face-to-face so she resorted to approaching him from behind in hopes of being healed, freed from the curse of shame that held her captive and not being discovered. This woman could not approach Jesus face to face to avoid highlighting her feeling of shame of her condition.<sup>25</sup> To bring it closer to home, the genealogy of Jesus Christ lists women who were shamed because of their own sinful choices or because of choices that they had no control over.

In honor and or shame cultures, a man’s honor is determined by the perceived sexual purity of his mother and females in his family. What would it mean if Jesus was born illegitimately to his mother Mary and his genealogy includes women who conceived his ancestors by shameful sexual ways? As an example, Genesis chapter thirty-eight presents a foreigner, Tamar, widow of both of Judah’s sons Er and Onan, who tricked her father-in-law, Judah, into sleeping with her by disguising herself as a prostitute so she could conceive a child. Tamar gave birth to twin sons, Perez and Zerah. Perez is a blood descendant of David and Jesus as recorded in Ruth 4:12 and Matthew 1:3.

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<sup>24</sup> Radford, “Feminism and Christology,” 45-56.

<sup>25</sup> Robert H. Albers and William M. Clements, *Shame: A Faith Perspective* (New York, NY: Taylor and Francis, 2013), 89, <https://doi-org.dtl.idm.oclc.org/10.4324/9781315870199>.

Other examples of Jesus' genealogy presenting shameful ancestry include Rahab as a foreigner and prostitute who married Salmon as described in Joshua 2:1-21 and 6:25 as a blood relative of David and Jesus and as recorded in Matthew 1:5. In Ruth chapter four, a Moabite woman named Ruth became the mother of Obed who is the father of Jesse, who is the father of David, who is the ancestor of Jesus Christ as recorded in Matthew 1:5. The account in 2 Samuel chapters eleven and twelve of Bathsheba's relationship with David is interpreted as shameful to the Davidic line because David committed adultery, conspiracy and murder. This relationship was sinful in God's sight resulting in the illness and ultimate death of David and Bathsheba's first child and David's fall, repentance and redemption.

Historically, these women have been presented as lacking in the most honorable quality for women, sexual purity, but "midrashic and post biblical traditions present them in a more positive light."<sup>26</sup> The presentation of the accounts of these women may be suggestive of a central theme of shame transformed by God's grace. Additionally, Jesus dined and associated with prostitutes, tax collectors, lepers, demon-possessed, Samaritans and Gentiles who were all classified as impure and defiled. He publicly held conversations with women such as Mary and Martha, the Syrophoenician woman and the woman at the well. He permitted the woman with the issue of blood for twelve years to touch Him and the prostitute to anoint his feet with her tears and costly perfume.<sup>27</sup> "God intervened, not only in their relationships with men in their lives but also to transform

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<sup>26</sup> McNish and Dayringer, *Transforming Shame*, 9-10.

<sup>27</sup> McNish and Dayringer, *Transforming Shame*, 12.

their lives from those of questionable, if not sinful, natures, to states of innocence and virtue.”<sup>28</sup>

Jesus’ humble and shameful life began from his conception, having parents who were poor, being born in a stable filled with animals and a life and ministry that by today’s standards is a failure. His crucifixion was the ultimate archetypical shame. In the ancient world, crucifixion meant the victim would not receive a proper burial. This left the victim’s flesh to rot, be buried in a shallow grave and become food for wild animals that surrounded the foot of the cross.<sup>29</sup> “The psychology of Jesus’ situation is complex indeed and the fear of pain and death is clearly part of it. But added to the mix is also the expected betrayal, the anticipated shame and the actual agony of discerning and following the will of God.<sup>30</sup> There may be times in our lives when following the will of God may result in us anticipating being shamed.

In the New Testament, the reference to shame occurs less often than in the Old Testament. The negative aspect of shame “*aischyne*” occurs on approximately thirty occasions. Hebrews 12:2 states, “Looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its *shame*, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.”<sup>31</sup> Further explanation for Jesus enduring the shame of the cross to establish a new way of living in the world is found in 1 Corinthians 1:18-31.

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<sup>28</sup> McNish and Dayringer, *Transforming Shame*, 10.

<sup>29</sup> McNish and Dayringer, *Transforming Shame*, 10-13.

<sup>30</sup> Stephen Cherry, *Healing Agony: Re-Imagining Forgiveness* (London, UK: Continuum Intl. Pub. Group, 2012), 119, <http://public.ebookcentral.proquest.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=5309788>.

<sup>31</sup> McNish and Dayringer, *Transforming Shame*, 10-13.

For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God...Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God. He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, in order that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord. (1 Cor. 1:18, 26-31).<sup>32</sup>

Jesus, the second Adam, changes the relationship between God and humanity by enduring shame instead of denying or hiding from it. By identifying with humankind’s weakness and foolishness, God in Christ has totally addressed our shame and guilt.

Author and psychologist, C. D. Schneider, uses the term “shamelessness of the New Testament” to illustrate that the Greek word for shame “aidos” means “awe for the sacred” and occurs only once. It further means to keep a proper distance from the holy things. Old Testament rituals such as temple worship, ceremonial washing and purity rites are examples of how this was embraced. However, in the New Testament, “shame-based” rituals were canceled by the divine act of Jesus who sacrificed his life so that we would have direct access to God behind the curtain or veil that once separated us from direct access to God being torn from top to bottom upon Jesus Christ sacrificing his life on the cross as described in Hebrews 10:19-23.<sup>33</sup>

Theologian and author, Dr. Andrew Parks, uses the Korean word, “Han” to describe a slow death of the spirit and a deep wound suffered by victims. This results in feelings of sadness, hopelessness, resignation and despair. Han is the “collapsed anguish of the heart due to psychosomatic, social, economic, political and cultural repression and

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<sup>32</sup> McNish and Dayringer, *Transforming Shame*, 10-13.

<sup>33</sup> McNish and Dayringer, *Transforming Shame*, 10-13.

oppression.”<sup>34</sup> It is a physical, mental and spiritual response of a person being wronged causing the victim’s soul to rupture or ache. In Luke 4:18-19, Jesus declares the purpose of His earthly mission being to bring good news to the poor, proclaim release to captives, recovery of sight to the blind, to free the oppressed and declare the year of Jubilee or God’s favor. He came to bring good news to the afflicted and those who were sinned against. Jesus’ teaching focused on comforting those who were wronged, giving a voice to the voiceless and liberating the oppressed from their han and confronting the oppressor.<sup>35</sup>

Theologian Brad Binau examines the human condition and concludes that a relational model is essential to addressing the “disunion” between God, self and others. He states that those who have focused on atonement appear to have neglected to incorporate the implications of shame and those who have focused on shame have neglected to incorporate the implications for atonement. He suggests marrying the two to introduce a new understanding of atonement that responds to shame in a meaningful way. Binau references the concepts of essence, existence and telos to discuss what is humanity essentially and existentially created for.

In his exploration of what it means to essentially be human, Binau applies the doctrine of the trinity to explain who God is and the relational view represented. He uses the word “Perichoresis” meaning “mutual interdependence of the persons of the Godhead” to describe the distinct roles of each person of the trinity in relationship with

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<sup>34</sup> Park, *From Hurt to Healing*, 11.

<sup>35</sup> Park, *From Hurt to Healing*, 11.

one another.<sup>36</sup> He also references the community and koinonia. The image of the trinitarian God-head is a reminder that no one can find oneself, know oneself or be oneself by oneself. Humanity is created to be in community; seeking oneself outside of community is only hell. Ultimately, Binau applies the trinitarian doctrine to suggest a relational anthropology.

Binau revisits the theology of atonement as “at-one-ment” which in the past has been viewed as simplistic and trivial without addressing the “what” of salvation, who God is and how God acts. He references the what, who and how of salvation when using the term “at-one-ment” to depict the elementary drive to wholeness and unity. He uses the term “at-one-ment” to include the telos of humanity and the energy that moves us in its direction.

Binau reflects on Feminist Theology providing insight into the relational nature of human “essence” and human “telos” as potentials in addressing shame. Specifically, the human condition has a lack of integrity and broken relationships and atonement driving humanity closer to wholeness in relationships. Suffering is not included when interpreting atonement to prevent it from misconstruing the crucifixion as “divine child abuse.” Instead, atonement is viewed as the grace of God required to heal brokenness. The moment a relationship is offered as restoration it no longer solely refers to Jesus’ death on the cross. Instead, recapitulation is accomplished.

Binau argues that recapitulation is atonement rather than the achievement of atonement.<sup>37</sup> Recapitulation occurred when the man, Jesus, finished everything required

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<sup>36</sup> Brad A. Binau, “When Shame Is the Question: How Does the Atonement Answer?” *Journal of Pastoral Theology* 12, no. 1 (2002): 89-113.

<sup>37</sup> Binau, “When Shame Is the Question,” 89-113.

to reverse humanity's problem and restore humanity to original fellowship with God. Although complex in explaining Christ's death and resurrection, recapitulation brings unity in the reading of the Old and New Testaments based on the atoning work of Jesus Christ. Theology and psychotherapy tend to focus on humanity's behavior that hides or minimizes the full truth of what God completed within us not just for us. Salvation through the triune God addressed humanity's guilt of our behavior and transformed our shame with a new identity.<sup>38</sup>

Pivotal to the community of faith is one's new identity established by God in covenant that extends throughout the Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament, circumcision demonstrated a visible sign of a covenant relationship between God and His chosen people, the Israelites. In the New Testament, visible entrance into a covenant relationship with God is demonstrated through water baptism. Both instances reveal God's initiation and invitation to enter a covenant relationship with Him and a gift of grace received from Him. It is from this baptismal covenant relationship that one's new identity is established; and a new name is given.<sup>39</sup> Isaiah 43:1 says, "I have called you by name, you are mine."

The Old Testament is filled with accounts of God giving individuals a new name. Not only does a new name represent new identification in God, but most essential, the name carried the essence of God and His power to cleanse. In Genesis 17:5, the name Abram means "exalted father" and is changed by God to Abraham that means "father of a multitude" describing the purpose that Abraham was to fulfill. In the New Testament,

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<sup>38</sup> Philip D. Jamieson, *The Face of Forgiveness: A Pastoral Theology of Shame and Redemption* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016), 68.

<sup>39</sup> Albers and Clements, *Shame*, 94.

Jesus' name was held in high esteem by the Christian community and the crux of salvation as declared in Acts 4:12 "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind [humankind] by which we must be saved."

Therefore, God gives a new name in the covenant act of baptism and the impartation of a new identity that is not shame-based but sanctified by God who desires to be in covenant relationship with all of humanity. Ephesians 1:13 and 4:30 present a motif of the Holy Spirit sealing one's new identity through baptism and securing one into a caring faith community.

The faith community provides unconditional acceptance and inclusion through the common bond of being in covenant relationship with God. It is not the responsibility of the person to seek acceptance by the faith community. Furthermore, one's identity is connected to oneness with the crucified and resurrected Christ and given to one because of God's grace. Ultimately, identity sought outside of the grace gift from God results in an identity of shame. Humanity's deep desire for acceptance, belonging, identity, connectedness and inclusion is provided in the faith community's covenant relationship with God. Genuine fellowship within the faith community is a key healing ingredient for shame-based persons. When this is not provided, a person struggling with shame will resort to isolation. The crippling impact of shame is overturned through relationships or communities that are open and inviting. A healthy and inviting faith community extends grace through acceptance, engages in mutual disclosure, offers prayer and establishes an environment of trust and models embracing one's humanity completely.<sup>40</sup> Feminist theologian Daly further establishes the necessity of the faith community's continued

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<sup>40</sup> Albers and Clements, *Shame*, 105-107.



reflection of Christ as the Redeemer and word of God; and it was not a one-time phenomenon for the historical Jesus.<sup>41</sup>

Recapitulation influences the answer to the question regarding who is the God who saves humankind and what is humanity saved from. Binau describes the one who saves as God who is relational, not forceful and His power is perfectly revealed through love. When answering the question of what we are saved from and for, recapitulation looks at Jesus' identification with our shame and what He promises during our shame. Throughout Jesus' life, His identification is with those who have been oppressed and marginalized. Shame was a part of Jesus' life on earth and His experience on the cross was the greatest experience of shame.

Roman government designed crucifixions to inflict physical and emotional anguish of shame. Jesus experienced shame during His crucifixion when His physical nakedness was exposed and in Matt. 27:46 and Mk. 15:34 "About three in the afternoon Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" (which means "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?") when He feared abandonment by God.<sup>42</sup> However, Binau notes that Jesus' cry was not due to total separation from the divine presence of God experienced by sinners but resulted in Jesus being heartbroken from the shame that penetrated the very core of His being as a depiction of the severity of the shame He suffered.

Recapitulation not only provides an understanding that Jesus saves us from shame and fear of being abandoned. It also answers the question, for what does Jesus save us

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<sup>41</sup> Albers and Clements, *Shame*, 105-107.

<sup>42</sup> Binau, "When Shame Is the Question," 89-113.

from. John 10:10 states, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy, I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” Jesus saves us from shame to give us abundant life demonstrated in perfect love. Not only does the shame holding us in bondage have a history, but it also has an eschatological aspect that grips our future based upon a fear of abandonment. Jesus saves us for a shame-free future secured by His love that will never let us go. Jesus’ work is referred to as recapitulation “Who we are and will be has been recapitulated at Easter” as a proclamation that Jesus suffered all that we suffer, including the tormenting anxiety created by the uncertainty of the future.<sup>43</sup> “Only the one who died shame and was forsaken on the cross, yet who was raised and declared worthy by God, the one who relentlessly befriends by recapitulating our experience can offer such an embrace and fully atone us.”<sup>44</sup> Jesus is the only one who can fully atone humanity. He is the only one who can identify with the suffering of humanity and through His death give us a new identification through covenant relationship with Him. He is the only one who can liberate us from our sin, guilt and shame and bring us into a covenant relationship with God, Himself and the community of believers. Theologian Robert H. Albers further proclaims that theologically, all healing comes solely by the power, gift and the grace of God who works through processes, people in counseling, consolation and conversation to effect change and transformation.<sup>45</sup>

In Christian Theology, atonement is a response to sinful acts or a state of being. In the secular world, atonement is a response to interpersonal wrongdoings or violating the

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<sup>43</sup> Binau, “When Shame Is the Question,” 89-113.

<sup>44</sup> Binau, “When Shame Is the Question,” 89-113.

<sup>45</sup> Albers and Clements, *Shame*, 113-129.

morals of others. According to philosopher Linda Radzik, the effects of wrongdoings do not remain isolated in time. Instead, the effects continue in the form of resentment or guilt, injury or self-hatred, a desire for revenge, or impulse to rationalize. Past wrongdoings lead to future transgressions in the private lives and history of people. Radzik defines wrongdoings as insults, threats or harm to individuals or communities. If there is not an attempt to address wrongdoings inflicted upon a person, the effects of the wrongdoing will continue to be felt. Professor of Philosophy and Law, Herbert Morris, further points out that wrongdoing surfaces when there is a concept of righting the wrong, making amends or atoning. Wrongdoing fosters separation which is a key factor to shame that arises through separation or a rupture of the social bond that leaves people isolated, as outcasts and silenced.<sup>46</sup>

The origin of the word atonement, ‘at-one-ment’, suggests reconciliation as the primary goal. Although Christian Theology portrays the doctrine of atonement as a positive and liberating attribute of Christian living, it can also be associated with positive and negative connotations. For many, the doctrine of atonement means that Christ died to save or deliver us from our sins and his suffering and death paid the penalty for our sins rather than substitutionary suffering and sacrifice on the cross. In practice, atonement may be experienced as punitive and alienating. As an example, the Ireland’s Magdalen laundries were established by churches for thousands of women who were required to atone their wrongdoings that were predominantly sexual sins. The Irish Magdalen asylums were initially established in the eighteenth century as reform and training homes for prostitutes. As they came under the control of the Catholic Church, females who were

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<sup>46</sup> Miriyam Clough, “Atoning Shame,” *Feminist Theology* 23, no. 1 (2014): 7-8.

unmarried, had been raped or sexually abused or thought to be “too pretty” were housed in the asylums. In theological terms, they were expected to work for atonement and provide financial contributions to the convents. Many of the women had done nothing, but society viewed them as a temptation to men. Women were stripped of their freedom, names, babies and identity. They were made to wash the dirty laundry of the Irish society as a symbol of the women being unclean. Significant shame was attached to the Magdalen asylums. The atonement system established at the Magdalen asylums taught that these women would only receive reconciliation with God, redemption and forgiveness of sins after their death. For a woman already suffering from shame, the demand for them to atone only heaps more shame upon them. Ironically, at a later time frame, the Irish Catholic Church who inflicted shame upon women at the Magdalen asylum, was required to make amends or atone for their harsh mistreatment of women. This study of the Magdalene asylum and laundries identified the concepts of both wrongdoing and atonement as fluid and dependent upon socially established moral values and the power upheld.<sup>47</sup>

### **Conclusion**

As the women’s right movement came on the horizon to sound the alarm for women to receive social, economic and political equality with men, women in the faith community began to be stirred to pursue gender equality in biblical interpretation of women’s roles and positions. Traditional Christianity was saturated in a male-dominated backdrop and its biblical interpretation classified women as subservient to men. Feminist

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<sup>47</sup> Clough, “Atoning Shame,” 10-13.

theologians believed that women would not experience civil rights equality until change occurred in traditional Christianity's view that God created women as second class to men. In other words, to effect change in the treatment of women in the community meant to effect change in the treatment of women in the faith community. These challenges continue to face women on a secular and non-secular level.

Pioneer feminist theologians such as Mary Daly and Rosemary Radford Ruether recognized the need to revisit Christian Theology that viewed scripture with a lens that was not "gender blind" as it pertained to the equality of women and their roles in biblical accounts as well as in the faith community today. Mary Daly's remedy appears to be extremely radical in calling for a total dismissal of Jesus' masculinity for men and women to have equality. However, feminist theologian Rosemary Radford Ruether posits that it is against God's will for women to be classified as subservient because their gender bears credibility. Feminist theologian, Yolanda Dreyer, presents a question of whether a woman can be authentic in the presence of God because of her lack of opportunity to become autonomous in a male dominate society, is a great factor to consider. God's masculinity may place some women at risk of avoiding and isolating from God due to a fear that His treatment of them will be similar to their negative experience in a male dominated society. However, this heightens the need for God to be presented in a loving way by the people of faith.

Atonement Theology presents God as the One who provides salvation and covering of humanity's shame. This was made possible through the atoning work of Jesus Christ whose crucifixion was shameful yet paid the price for humanity's relationship and fellowship with God to be restored. God has always desired a relationship with humanity

as first demonstrated by His relationship with Adam before Eve was presented to Adam. It was further demonstrated when after the fall of Adam and Eve, God pursued them and asked Adam “Where Are You?” in Genesis 3:9. God further acts upon His initiation of reconciliation by activating the plan of redemption in Genesis 3:15.

The first account of shame is recorded in Genesis chapter three and provides a picture of the introduction of shame and its impact upon Adam and Eve who were initially innocent, free spirited, unashamed of their nakedness, and in relationship and fellowship with God. After they sinned and disobeyed God, they were confronted by God who exposed their sin and gave them an opportunity to confess their guilt. Their hiding was also indicative of the shame they experienced as they attempted to cover themselves with leaves and hide from God and one another. God did not approach Adam and Eve to bring about shame but to bring about a confession of guilt. Adam and Eve’s attempts to cover their shame in the Garden of Eden was insufficient and required God to provide physical, mental, emotional and spiritual covering.

Feminist Theology and Atonement Theology both make significant contributions to my doctoral project. Traditional Christianity promotes the biblical interpretation of scripture to reflect women as flawed, devalued, defective and unequal to men. It keeps women in bondage to these misconceptions and places women at risk of not fulfilling their God given purposes. The Samaritan woman’s account in John chapter four is a picture of a woman subjected to the traditions and expectations of a male dominant culture that viewed women as subservient. However, many feminist theologians see Jesus as the first liberator of women. Atonement theologians view Jesus identifying with women’s shame because of His own shameful ancestry depicted in scripture and for

ultimately the shame He endured on the cross. Jesus' intentional conversation and invitation to the Samaritan woman to come into relationship with Himself in John chapter four is a historical and paradigm shift for women and the marginalized being brought into equality in a social, political, cultural and religious arena. This is further demonstrated when Jesus' words of healing invoke transformation of the Samaritan woman who returns to her community and evangelizes her community as a liberated woman who was liberated by Jesus Christ, the first liberator of women. Not only was the Samaritan woman called out of hiding from herself, but she was also called out of hiding from others and God.

Jesus presented Himself to women who had no voice, were invisible, unimportant, oppressed, mistreated and abused. In turn, He invited them into a relationship with Himself so that He could remove the shame that held them emotionally, mentally and spiritually captive and gave them a new identity in His image. Jesus' death and atonement on the cross provided the healing balm for women to first come into community with Jesus and secondly with others. His death and atonement also provided an opportunity for women to relinquish their shame and receive their true identity established by God. Ultimately, women will recognize that God created them with divine purpose and the freedom to live an authentic life in the face and the presence of God.

As theologian Lewis B. Smedes pointed out, not all shame is bad. The effects of shame can drive a woman to seek a place of refuge to heal from the negative effects of shame. However, the church can be a breeding ground for women to experience more shame. This may prevent them from hearing God's call to come into relationship with Him and receive the free gift of salvation, grace and a new identity. Women suffering

from shame or unaware of the negative effects of shame need to be in community with other believers without the fear of being judged, rejected or devalued. This will present an opportunity for women to begin the journey of healing from shame.

The faith community or church bears the image of and identification with Jesus Christ and has the responsibility to continue to reflect the image of Jesus Christ, foster a safe place and a loving atmosphere. God is the initiator of exposing areas that are not a reflection of His image with shame being one. He is the One who extends an invitation for women suffering from shame to come out of hiding, enter into His presence and experience a relationship with Him that will allow them to be spiritually naked and authentic before Him. Because of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection, the penalty of sin has been satisfied and women's shame has been removed. He identified with their shame and took it upon Himself on the cross of Calvary.



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **INTERDISCIPLINARY FOUNDATIONS**

The discipline of psychology will be examined to provide supportive evidence of the importance of women suffering from shame having an opportunity to develop a trusting relationship to begin the journey to healing from shame. Shame has been examined in a biblical, historical and theological context. This chapter will introduce Relational-Cultural Theory/Therapy (RCT) as a pivotal framework in understanding women's innate desire to connect with others, the impact of hiding and disconnecting for self-preservation, the exclusion of those deemed by society as marginal and minimal value, the importance of culture, empathy, and the healing power of relationships in allowing women to experience authenticity and discover their identity in the context of safe relationships.

Relationships are critical to our survival and well-being.<sup>1</sup> From the beginning of time, relationships have been the core desire of humankind as it pertains to others and even with God. In the first three chapters of Genesis, it is evident that God desires to be in relationship and community with Adam and Eve. Scripture references God walking and communing with Adam before he presented Eve to him as his wife. It was God who noticed that Adam was alone. It was God who stated that it was not good for man to be

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<sup>1</sup> Marcela Mastos, Jose Pinto-Gouveia, and Vania, "Understanding the Importance of Attachment in Shame Traumatic Memory Relation to Depression: The Impact of Emotion Regulation Processes," *Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy* 20 (2013): 150, <https://doi.org/10.1002/cpp.786>.

alone. It was God who decided to create a helpmate suitable for Adam. This suggests that God was in relationship with Adam first on a spiritual level and then chose to bring Eve to Adam on an earthly platform and that the two of them would be in relationship with one another and with Him. From their relationship, Adam and Eve would produce children and the community of their family would produce intimate relationships for one another to grow, to know God first, themselves and others.

### *Project Theme*

Over the past fifty years, researchers have identified approaches that concentrate on relationships that are inside and outside of the therapeutic environment. Researchers have discovered that these relationships have a significant impact upon the well-being of culturally diverse clients. Historically, few approaches have theoretically addressed the cultural and diversity needs of the client. Instead, there has been a reliance upon ethical codes and multicultural or advocacy competencies to address these areas. However, Relational-Cultural Theory has operationalized how counselors can use the therapeutic alliance with culturally diverse clients to explore current relational interactions. Clients self-identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning [LGBTQ]; racial and ethnic minorities; low-income, and individuals with disabilities are categorized as culturally diverse clients and marginalized populations.<sup>2</sup>

Traditional psychology supported independence, autonomy and competition. Courage is traditionally portrayed in characters that ride off into the sunset to take

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<sup>2</sup> Natoya Hills Haskins and Brandee Appling, "Relational-Cultural Theory and Reality Therapy: A Culturally Responsive Integrative Framework," *Journal of Counseling and Development* 95, no. 1 (2017): 87-99, <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12120>.

extensive risk without fear. Rarely discussed in psychology, courage is incorporated in the Relational-Cultural Theory framework as a relational component known as “encourage” of one another. Courage, confidence and strength increases connectedness rather than isolation which eats away at courage, stunts growth, renders powerlessness and immobilization.<sup>3</sup> Relational-Cultural Theory began as a theory of development that views development through the lens of relationships.<sup>4</sup>

In the 1970s and 1980s, Relational-Cultural Theory was developed by psychiatrist Jean Baker Miller who was captivated by the intersection of culture and mental health especially as it related to women. Instead of focusing on what occurs in women’s minds, the focus was on the effect relationships and culture have on women. Her research revolved around how power and culture impact women’s expectations. Relational-Cultural Theory (RCT) suggests that all people long to be connected with others and their psychological growth and development happen within interpersonal relationships.<sup>5</sup> In RCT, connection involves both encounter and active process and at its core is respect which is parallel to unconditional positive regard used in person-centered therapy, but also includes bidirectionality. Respect is enabled when therapists are open to witnessing both clients’ and their own complexity. Connection occurs through the participation in a relationship that invites exposure, curiosity, and openness to possibility. It offers safety from contempt and humiliation, yet it cannot guarantee comfort. Connection is often a

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<sup>3</sup> Judith V. Jordan, “Relational-Cultural Theory: The Power of Connection to Transform Our Lives,” *Journal of Humanistic Counseling* 56, no. 3 (2017): 228-243, <https://doi.org/10.1002/johc.12055>.

<sup>4</sup> Tonya R. Hammer, Hugh C. Crethar, and Cristi Cannon, “Convergence of Identities through the Lens of Relational-Cultural Theory,” *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health* 11, no. 2 (2016): 132.

<sup>5</sup> Shanita Brown, Kashunda Mcgriff, and Stacy Speedlin, “Using Relational-Cultural Theory to Negotiate Relational Rebuilding in Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence,” *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health* 13, no. 2 (2017): 136-147, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2017.1355289>.

gateway to increased conflict because safety in the relationship invites differences to surface. The response to the differences is a litmus test to the quality of the connection to determine if there is an increase in self-worth, clarity, zest and desire for more relationships. “Connection involves the respectful negotiation of differences that facilitates growth and the emergence of something new.”<sup>6</sup>

Attachment theorists posit that early childhood experiences with caregivers influence internal workings of self and others and in turn direct feeling, thoughts, behaviors and expectations in relationships.<sup>7</sup> Humans are wired to connect throughout their entire lifespans. In a growth-fostering relationship both people are open to being vulnerable and changed by one another.<sup>8</sup> Disconnection in relationships can minimize growth and wellness for a person especially if someone has power over the other person. It can also foster the internalization of relational images that guide how women relate to others and perceive themselves.<sup>9</sup> Relational images are the foundations that help a person decide who they are and the expectations of others. They are usually developed during early childhood and have the potential to become controlling images when a dominant group prescribes a negative connotation. When controlling images conflict with a person’s authentic self, the person will oftentimes choose to hide the parts of themselves that that does not meet the expectations of the dominant culture and will resort to safeguarding themselves by disconnection as a way to conform to the false images. They fear that

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<sup>6</sup> Maureen Walker and Wendy Rosen, *How Connections Heal: Stories from Relational-Cultural Therapy* (New York, NY: Guilford Publications, 2004), 9, ProQuest Ebook Central.

<sup>7</sup> Matos, Pinto-Gouveia, and Vania, “Understanding the Importance,” 150.

<sup>8</sup> Jordan, “Relational-Cultural Theory,” 228-243.

<sup>9</sup> Jordan, “Relational-Cultural Therapy,” 228-243.

nonconformity and its consequences will result in increased isolation that most human beings attempt to avoid. Under these constraints, people learn that they cannot have an authentic effect on relationships that are most significant and develop a degree of relational incompetence.<sup>10</sup> Relational-Cultural Theory is both a theory and a practice focused on “talk therapy” and centered on the premise that early and ongoing relationships shape the majority of a person’s life. Furthermore, expectations held by people influence their behavior.<sup>11</sup>

In 1978, Jean Baker Miller began to work with psychologists Irene Stiver, Judith Jordan and Janet Surrey to examine traditional psychodynamics theories that misrepresented women’s experiences. Initially, their theory was called the Stone Center Theory and self-in-relation theory. As the first director of the Stone Center, Miller provided a more accurate portrayal of women’s psychological development.

As Relational-Cultural Theory was evolving, psychologist Carol Gilligan was exploring how traditional developmental theories applied to women’s psychology. She questioned the application of psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg’s Theory of Moral Development upon girls and women noting its studies are solely based on males. Women were assigned morality “care;” whereas, men were assigned morality “rights.” When traditional male standards such as justice, autonomy, competition and independence were applied to girls and women, they were characterized as deficient and inadequate. In 1987, Gilligan, Relational-Cultural theorists and Judith Herman’s Victims of Violence Group organized a conference called “Learning from Women” which was sponsored by Harvard

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<sup>10</sup> Catie A. Greene, “A Culturally Sensitive Approach to Substance Use Counseling on Campus,” *Journal of College Counseling* 20 (July 1, 2017): 157.

<sup>11</sup> Jordan, “Relational–Cultural Therapy,” 228-243.

Medical Center. However, women of color, lesbians, women of other sexual identification, physically challenged and from different economic backgrounds argued that the original Relational-Cultural theorists were negligent due to excluding them from the studies that were conducted primarily on White, middle-class and well-educated women. Jean Baker Miller listened to the concerns and took measures to include the voices of marginalized women in her studies.<sup>12</sup>

Relational-Cultural Therapy is a form of mental healthcare that stresses the importance of relationships as it relates to one's psychological and emotional health. It is sometimes called Relational Psychotherapy or Relational Therapy and includes cultural factors such as power and respect, class, gender and race that affect relationships. Relational-Cultural Therapy is used to address people experiencing symptoms such as eating disorders, low self-esteem and relationship problems resulting from depression, anxiety and stress.<sup>13</sup>

Author Christiane Sanderson posits that shame has been largely overlooked in the therapeutic process with clients. Most counseling training programs allude to shame but do not address how shame can manifest in a counseling session or how it can be managed to prevent a client from having an interruption or termination of treatment. Additionally, there is a lack of discussion in counseling textbooks and journal articles. A content analysis completed by author Brené Brown discovered only one out of seventy-five mental health textbooks addressed shame. The limited amount of information in mental health teaching materials makes it challenging for therapists to identify shame in therapy

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<sup>12</sup> Jordan, "Relational-Cultural Therapy," 228-243.

<sup>13</sup> Brown, Mcgriff, and Speedlin, "Using Relational-Cultural Theory," 136-147.

sessions with clients and its impact on the therapeutic relationship. “You must address your own, and your clients’ shame in order to practice ethically and effectively and to recover from shame and build shame resilience.”<sup>14</sup>

Some clients will attend therapy and be aware of their shame and its effect while others will be unaware of their shame and its effect. Unlike other emotions, shame may be difficult to explore because of its hidden nature and clients’ masking their shame as a protective factor. Clients’ fear of being further shamed can make them appear to be resistant to being transparent, vulnerable and exposing their perceived flaws. This makes it difficult to discuss shame or release it. In an effort to minimize further shaming or reinforcing clients’ shame, the therapist must be sensitive, apply therapeutic techniques and provide psychoeducation on the nature and origin of shame.<sup>15</sup>

In a therapeutic setting, it is imperative for a therapist to present authentically, nonjudgmentally and create a safe space where clients feel free to express their identity authentically and growth is fostered. This will demonstrate mutuality and acceptance of the client.<sup>16</sup> Innovative and restorative space has the potential to be established when two people, a family and the therapist and family members form a relationship known as the “I-you” relationship. The space created is the most important aspect of the human experience because it contains the basic components of which the human psyche is formed and organized. It is the deepest intimacy that allows people to share their most vulnerable feelings and a place that can feel like a nightmare. People have an opportunity

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<sup>14</sup> Christiane Sanderson, *Counseling Skills for Working with Shame* (London, UK: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2015), 171, <http://web.b.ebscohost.com.nocdbproxy.xavier.edu/ehost/ebookviewer>.

<sup>15</sup> Sanderson, *Counseling Skills for Working with Shame*, 190.

<sup>16</sup> Hammer, Crethar, and Cannon, “Convergence of Identities,” 137.

to co-create their awareness of their pain and wounds. This implies that the simplest element of humanity is characterized by a relationship with one another. Communication and relationships between humans are core elements in the human psyche.<sup>17</sup> The human psyche and the soma (body) have been connected from the beginning of humanity. The biblical proverb recorded in Proverbs 17:22, “A merry heart does good like a medicine” and the “heart-ache” described in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* (act 3, scene 1) are examples.<sup>18</sup>

### *Biblical Foundations*

Relational-Cultural Theory is grounded in feminist theory.<sup>19</sup> In opposition to Western methodologies that promote individuation and separation, RCT promotes the relationships as significant to human growth and connectedness. It identifies isolation as the root of dysfunction.<sup>20</sup> Psychiatrist Jean Baker Miller suggested that humankind, especially women, develop in and through relationships. Traditional theorists such as Freud and Erikson did not take into consideration that the emotional and mental health of women improves in the context of relationships. Relational-Cultural Theory incorporates an understanding of the importance of a client’s context and cultural viewpoint.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Christian Gostecnik, Tanja Repic, and Robert Cvetek, “Potential Curative Space in Relational Family Therapy,” *Journal of Family Psychotherapy* 20, no. 1 (September 2009): 46-47.

<sup>18</sup> Howard S. Friedman and Roxane Cohen Silver, *Foundations of Health Psychology* (Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007), 14.

<sup>19</sup> Kristopher G. Hall, Sejal Barden, and Abigail Conley, “A Relational-Cultural Framework: Emphasizing Relational Dynamics and Multicultural Skill Development,” *Professional Counselor* 4, no. 1 (2014): 71-83, <https://doi.org/10.15241/kg.4.1.71>.

<sup>20</sup> Joe J. Richelle et al., “The Intersection of HIV and Intimate Partner Violence: An Application of Relational-Cultural Theory with Black and Latina Women,” *Journal of Mental Health Counseling* 42, no. 1 (January 2020): 38.

<sup>21</sup> Hammer, Crethar, and Cannon, “Convergence of Identities,” 127.



In 1978, Relational-Cultural Theory was launched following psychiatrist Jean Baker Miller's cutting-edge book *Toward a New Psychology of Women* in 1976. Traditional theories and practices emphasized autonomy and separation. Emphasis is placed on human weaknesses instead of challenging the maltreatment and abuse of children, stereotyping of people of color and different sexual orientation, race and class that hinders people from being included in society. People are silenced and shamed as a means of having power and control over them. Instead of generating connections in relationships, people will engage in disconnection to protect themselves.<sup>22</sup> Although people desire connection, they may also be fearful of making connections in relationships because of a fear of being hurt, humiliated and frightened from previous relationship experiences. They may look for ways to disconnect to keep parts of themselves they view as unacceptable to others hidden.<sup>23</sup>

### *Historical Foundation*

Psychoanalyst Helen Block Lewis coded hundreds of therapy sessions and identified shame as the primary emotion expressed by clients.<sup>24</sup> "How one is regarded by the culture influences one's ability to negotiate developmental tasks."<sup>25</sup> Neuroscience

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<sup>22</sup> Judith V. Jordan, *The Power of Connection: Recent Developments in Relational-Cultural Theory* (London, UK: Routledge, 2013), 3.

<sup>23</sup> Syntia Santos Dietz et al., "An International Learning Experience: Looking at Multicultural Competence Development through the Lens of Relational-Cultural Theory," *Journal of Counselor Practice* 8, no. 1 (January 2011), <https://doi.org/10.22229/thg802643>.

<sup>24</sup> Jordan, "Relational-Cultural Therapy, 36.

<sup>25</sup> Jordan, "Relational-Cultural Therapy, 36.

provides evidence that being excluded by society, shamed and devalued produces extreme pain and injury.

Central relational paradox occurs when one is humiliated, hurt or violated in early relationships and one's yearning for connection increases. It is a disconnection strategy often used by trauma survivors who have an innate drive towards relationships and acceptance but will withdraw to self-protect from being re-victimized. Trauma survivors will not only disconnect from others but also themselves. Those who attempt to connect typically will do so at the expense of being authentic. They develop a heightened sense that the level of vulnerability to enter authentic relationships is not safe.<sup>26</sup>

When shame is recognized in a client, a therapist should focus on strengthening the client's sense of self and increasing awareness of how the self is different from actions or thoughts rather than expecting reparations.<sup>27</sup> A therapist must be empathetic and view it as a coping mechanism the client has developed to survive. However, he or she must continue striving towards establishing a connection to encourage the client to release the safety guards of disconnection tactics and vacillate between connection and disconnection to feel safe. This involves the therapist introducing the client to the separation of current relational possibilities from past relational images. The therapist works to lead those suffering towards a journey of healing.

Relational-Cultural Therapy implies that developing relational resilience, the power to return to connection after being in disconnection and the power to reach out for

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<sup>26</sup> Victoria E. Kress et al., "The Use of Relational-Cultural Theory in Counseling Clients Who Have Traumatic Stress Disorders," *Journal of Counseling and Development* 96, no. 1 (2018): 106–114, <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12182>.

<sup>27</sup> Daniel Gutierrez and W. Bryce Hagedorn, "The Toxicity of Shame Applications for Acceptance and Commitment Therapy," *Theory* 35, no. 1 (January 2013): 45, November 17, 2020, <http://eds.a.ebscohost.com.nocdbproxy.xavier.edu/eds/>.

help, is pivotal to healing. Resilience is not inherent but established in relationships. In addition to relational resilience, relational courage is also key to a shamed person establishing relationships. Unlike the traditional belief that courage is an internal trait that requires no display of fear, Relational-Cultural Therapy involves being in tune with their fear and seeking help to address it.

Not only does Relational-Cultural Therapy focus on psychotherapy but it also serves as a framework for addressing social justice that inflicts conditions that cause people to suffer. It does not aim to change people to fit into a dysfunctional society but rather empowering them to heal through connections and help others to heal through connections. It is a way to bridge relational, multicultural and social justice competencies.<sup>28</sup>

### *Theological Foundation*

The Core Concepts of Relational-Cultural Theory are:

1. People grow through and toward relationships throughout the lifespan.
2. Movement toward mutuality rather than separation characterizes mature functioning.
3. Relationship differentiation and elaboration characterize growth.
4. Mutual empathy and mutual empowerment are at the core of growth-fostering relationships.
5. Authenticity is necessary for real engagement and full participation in growth-fostering relationships.

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<sup>28</sup> Kress et al., "The Use of Relational-Cultural Theory," 39.

6. In growth fostering relationships, all people contribute and grow or benefit.

Development is not a one-way street.

7. One of the goals of development from a relational perspective is the development of increased relational competence and capacities over the lifespan.
8. Mutual empathy is the primary means through which we grow. Placing mutual empathy at the core of human development not only affects the individual but also contributes to the growth of a just society. Social justice is the outcome of the practice of mutuality in which the needs and experiences of both people in any given interaction are respected and honored.<sup>29</sup>

Authenticity is defined as the ability to represent oneself as completely as possible in relationship with an empathetic response that will produce mutual growth and wellbeing.<sup>30</sup> When one is not able to represent oneself authentically in relationships and is not heard or responded to by the other person in the relationship, then one may disconnect, suppress one's responses and become inauthentic in one's presentation of oneself. One interprets this as we cannot have an impact on others in the relationship.<sup>31</sup> The counseling relationship provides an opportunity for counselors to assist clients in experimenting with authenticity and examine some of their relational models. The goal in counseling is "to lessen the experience of isolation, increase the capacity of self-empathy

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<sup>29</sup> Jordan, "Relational-Cultural Therapy," 28-29.

<sup>30</sup> Jordan, "Relational-Cultural Therapy," 34.

<sup>31</sup> Judith V. Jordan, L. M. Hartling, and M. Walker, eds., *The Complexity of Connection: Writings from the Stone Center's Jean Baker Miller Training Institute* (New York, NY: Guilford Publications, 2004), 11, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com>.

and empathy for others, and develop an appreciation of the power of context and limiting cultural/relational images.”<sup>32</sup>

Disconnection occurs when one person misunderstands, invalidates, excludes, humiliates or injures another person. If an injured person with lesser power can present his or her disconnection and pain to a person with greater power and receive a caring and concerning response, the person with less power will experience a sense of “mattering” and having an impact on someone else. If the person with lesser power experiences the opposite response, he or she will learn to suppress this aspect of his or her experience and shift into hiding and inauthenticity to stay in a relationship. This often results in shame and withdrawal as one moves away from genuine relationships that produce growth. Many times, the person with lesser power will take steps to fit in, be visible and be accepted by the person with greater power. He or she will often blame himself or herself for the disconnection in the relationship and will resort to isolation.

Relational images are internal expectations created from our early life experiences in relationships that influence expectations in other relationships. These images are also influenced by societal expectations and values.<sup>33</sup> For many women, families-of-origin and societal expectations develop relational images of being that devalue and idealize women as “good girl,” “good woman,” “good mother,” “good daughter,” and “superwoman” that oppresses women as it limits their relational repertoires to moral goodness and generates a sense of self that is hypervigilant, self-critical, and inauthentic.

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<sup>32</sup> Thelma Duffey and Heather Trepal, “Special Section: Relational-Cultural Theory,” *Journal of Counseling and Development* 94, no. 4 (2016): 380, <https://10.1002/jcad.12055>.

<sup>33</sup> Jordan, “Relational-Cultural Therapy,” 34.

This places a woman at risk of developing psychological symptoms.<sup>34</sup>

Marginalized groups are devalued and this results in disconnection, negative expectations for oneself and relationships and affects one's sense of worth in the community. Shame and worthlessness produce disconnection and immobilization. Psychologist Judith Jordan states, "In shame, one feels disconnected, that one's being is at fault, that one is unworthy of empathetic response and that one is unlovable. Often in shame, people move out of connection, lose their sense of efficacy and lose their ability to authentically represent their experience."<sup>35</sup> Shame arises when one believes that he or she is unworthy and if people knew more about them, they would be rejected and ridiculed.

Psychologist Silvan Tomkins identifies shame as an original affect present at birth and captured in gaze aversion. Shame is also imposed on people to dominate and strip them of their power. Shaming is an effective way to silence and isolate marginalized people. "Isolation is the glue that holds oppression in place."<sup>36</sup> Marginalized groups become oppressed as they internalize the standards of the dominant group who capitalizes on perpetuating the shame. To guard oneself from this effect, individuals will create or join a community and exchange shame for pride. Groups such as gay pride, Black pride, Black Lives Matter and girl power are examples.

Researchers argue that successful counseling includes empathetic relationships that are culturally sensitive and utilizes techniques such as mutual empathy and a mutual exchange of empathetic experiences during the counseling session. Relational-Cultural

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<sup>34</sup> Susan Simonds, *Depression and Women: An Integrative Treatment Approach* (New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company, 2001), ProQuest Ebook Central.

<sup>35</sup> Jordan, "Relational-Cultural Therapy," 34.

<sup>36</sup> Jordan, "Relational-Cultural Therapy," 34.

Therapy opens up the counselor and client to connect in a safe environment. It is important to have a multicultural understanding to aid in the prevention of minority clients feeling disconnected in therapy due to typically being misunderstood by the dominant culture. The counselor strives to understand the reasons for relational disconnections and help the client to repair their inaccurate views of the relational process.<sup>37</sup>

Individual identities are developed within relationships in a person's life. Relational-Cultural Theory's focus on relationships and how they are constructed within the context of society provide an opportunity to examine the merging of client identities. It is important to understand that people have identities resulting from their various inherent and adopted characteristics such as gender, race, religion, ability, age, cultural background and language of origin. A person's overall identity is a reflection of how these characteristics overlap and merge. In the counseling profession, it is imperative to include clients' cultural context. Privilege, social status, target and agent status, convergence and salience are social constructs that affect people's individual and cultural development and play an important role in defining the context that people live and develop.

Privilege occurs when a set of conditions systematically empowers certain groups based on race, gender and ability and disempowers others. "It is an internal construct that involves unearned benefits afforded to powerful social groups within systems of oppression."<sup>38</sup> It is further defined as having a status or identity that is preferred or

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<sup>37</sup> Hall, Barden, and Conley, "A Relational-Cultural Framework," 74-75.

<sup>38</sup> Hammer, Crethar, and Cannon, "Convergence of Identities," 128-129.

avored by society. Historically, men have been privileged in comparison to women in society as it relates to unequal pay for equal work and the right to vote or own property.<sup>39</sup>

Privilege is better understood in the context of societal interactions. Social status involves a perceived position of standing whereas social identity involves a perception of being a member of a societal group. Society assigns status to persons, but individuals assign their own identity based on self-perception regardless of society's assignment. A disparity may be noticeable in a counseling setting when a client's self-identity is incongruent with the status assigned from others in society.

Privilege is also governed by the value society assigns to a group and the devaluing of other groups. People are classified as target status or agent status. Target status refers to those who are disenfranchised, exploited, marginalized and victimized and often made to feel powerless by microaggressions from agent status, systems and institutions of oppression. People of agent status are typically from dominant social groups and privileged from birth.<sup>40</sup>

Race, gender and ability are salient and prominent markers of visible identity constructs that result in a response based on historical biases and stereotypes. For example, an African American woman with a disability would be classified as paying a "triple tax" daily because of her race, gender and disability. She must work extra hard to overcome oppression and marginalization in all three areas.

The goal of applying Relational-Cultural theory is associated with transformation rather than assimilation, accommodation or comparison of differences. True

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<sup>39</sup> Hammer, Crethar, and Cannon, "Convergence of Identities," 128-129.

<sup>40</sup> Hammer, Crethar, and Cannon, "Convergence of Identities," 128-129.



transformation occurs from a mutuality “built on a two-way openness to change, tolerance for uncertainty, empathetic listening, and a conviction that all real movement and growth must be in a relationship and mutual.”<sup>41</sup> Transformation produces systemic changes and requires people honoring and respecting people for where they are instead of where they are expected to be. The issues that generated shame and humiliation can be confronted. This provides the opportunity for the formation of a person’s new identity that honors past, present and future.<sup>42</sup>

### **Summary**

The field of psychology and more specifically, Relational-Cultural Theory (Therapy) are foundational to my doctoral project. Psychology provides the avenue for women who are shamed to explore the impact of shame on their mental, emotional and spiritual health as a result of past hurts, rejection, humiliation, exclusion and traumatic events. All of these have left women experiencing shame because they have not met their expectations, the expectations of others and even the expectations of God. As psychology examines the development of women, relationships have been proven to be the crux of women having the opportunity to re-create their experiences through Relational-Cultural Therapy based on the premise that people desire to be connected and in community.

Relational-Cultural Theory provides the tenets associated with the healing process for women suffering from shame. The need for a trusting person who is authentic, exemplifying mutual empathy, nonjudgmental, genuine, patient, a listener and willing to

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<sup>41</sup> Hammer, Crethar, and Cannon, “Convergence of Identities,” 138.

<sup>42</sup> Hammer, Crethar, and Cannon, “Convergence of Identities,” 138-139.

be vulnerable with a woman is critical to cultivating an emotionally safe atmosphere for women to become aware of the root cause of their inner pain. Shame drives women to hide who they are and what their experiences have been to avoid further shaming.

Many women are suffering from depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, and low self-worth as they have been targets due to race, gender and disabilities. They have been met with injustices from society due to racism, sexism and classism. This has resulted in many women being devalued and viewed as marginal or invisible.

God's perfect plan has always been to restore the relationship and fellowship between Himself and humankind. His perfect provision was through his son Jesus Christ who died so that our relationship with God could be restored. Jesus exemplified the importance of relationship with those who were shamed, marginalized and oppressed. Due to His pursuit of authentic relationships with humankind, women are able to be vulnerable and enter into a relationship with the One whom they can trust with their deepest pain and discover their true identity in Him rather than from the expectations of themselves and others. This affords women the opportunity to heal from mental, emotional and spiritual issues associated with shame.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **PROJECT ANALYSIS**

The overarching theme for my Doctor of Ministry project is shame resulting from traumatic life experiences. God has given me a vision to establish a pastoral care counseling center in the Avondale community in which my church is located to address the needs of the congregants of the identified church, congregants of churches in the immediate community context, and the residents in the immediate context community. The problem in my context as well as within its surrounding community is that many women do not recognize shame as the source of their internal and relational struggles. They are unaware of the negative effects of shame and may be reluctant to disclose their shameful experiences to church leaders and congregants due to a fear of being publicly exposed, rejected, and judged.

The biblical passage, John 4:16-18, informs my doctoral project of a counseling model to be used within the ministry context to help women heal from shame as it relates to trauma, poor decision making, and cultural stigmas placed on women. The pastoral care counseling center will be a safe haven and a place of refuge where biblical counseling will be presented to educate and assist with the alleviation of the negative effects of shame anyone may be experiencing so that they may begin the journey of healing.

The era of public shaming and public humiliation serves to inform my project on the importance of helping women to heal from shame whether it is self-imposed or society-imposed. The original methodology and approach demonstrated by God as He initiated calling Adam and Eve out of hiding, providing covering and an opportunity for them to confess their sin and disobedience was motivated by His love and desire to be in fellowship and relationship with humanity. The methodology and approach were also demonstrated by Jesus when He initiated the conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well in John chapter four, invited her to come out of hiding from her possible shameful past or shame inflicted upon her from the community and offered her the opportunity to confess the content of her shame.

Feminist Theology and Atonement Theology both make significant contributions to my doctoral project that focuses on raising women's awareness of the effects of shame on women. Traditional Christianity promotes the biblical interpretation of scripture to reflect women as flawed, devalued, defective, and unequal to men. It holds women in bondage to these misconceptions and places women at risk of not fulfilling their God given purposes. Feminist theologians see Jesus as the first liberator of women deprived of equality with men.

The field of psychology and more specifically, Relational-Cultural Theory (RCT) are foundational to my doctoral project. Psychology provides the avenue for women who are shamed to explore the impact of shame on their mental, emotional, and spiritual health because of past hurts, rejection, humiliation, exclusion, and traumatic events that have left women experiencing shame. As psychology examines the development of women, relationships have been proven to be the crux of women having the opportunity

to re-create their experiences through Relational-Cultural Therapy based on the premise that people desire to be connected and in community.

## **Methodology**

### *Planning*

After consultation with my school mentors, I decided to present my ministry research project in the form of a biblically based workshop for adult women ages eighteen years and older and who did not fall into the exclusionary criteria stipulated by the Human Subject Review Board. My hypothesis is, if women are provided a biblically based awareness workshop on the effects of shame, then women will become more knowledgeable of shame and better equipped to identify their negative shame-based behaviors and begin the journey towards healing. Having the opportunity to share in the workshop and becoming aware is the beginning of the healing process. My hypothesis will be measured using qualitative analysis inclusive of pre- and post-surveys, questionnaires, storytelling, and observations.

A project timeline was created to assist in the development, planning, and implementation of my ministry research project. One year prior to the implementation of my ministry research project, four professional associates and two contextual associates were invited to assist with my ministry research project. A letter was crafted and emailed to each potential professional associate and contextual associate. The letter detailed the purpose of my ministry research project, target audience, hypothesis, projected research project implementation date and location. An email was sent to the professional

associates and contextual associates containing the attached letter and a copy of my Candidacy Review Packet. All the professional associates and contextual associates accepted the invitation to assist with my ministry research project.

In February 2021, an invitational letter to serve as a workshop speaker was crafted and emailed to Dr. Neisha Wiley, Dr. Dana Harley, Dr. Jacqueline Smith, and Dr. Jamie Eaddy. All four accepted the invitations to speak at the workshop. Dr. Neisha Wiley was requested to speak on the topic “What Is Shame” and focus on the definition of shame, how shame is like and different from guilt, embarrassment and humiliation, differences in men and women. Dr. Dana Harley was requested to speak on the topic “Risk Factors for the Development of Shame” and address how childhood experiences, traumatic experiences, biological traits, and failure to meet one’s own expectations, societal expectations and family expectations may place a woman at risk of experiencing shame. Dr. Jacqueline Smith was requested to speak on the topic, “The Effects of Shame” and focus on how shame can impact a woman physically, mentally, relationally, and spiritually. Dr. Jamie Eaddy was requested to speak on the topic, “The Significance of Relationships in Healing from Shame” and focus on the account of the Samaritan Woman at the Well in John 4:1-42 and address the importance of women being connected and in relationship with others, the community of Believers, and Jesus Christ who takes away their shame and gives them a new identity in Him to begin the journey towards healing and respond to any questions. All four of the speakers were informed that following their presentations they would each have a fifteen minute timeframe to respond to questions.

Initial meetings were held separately in July 2020 with the professional associates and the contextual associates for approximately one hour via the Zoom platform to

provide an overview of the ministry research project, project timeline, discuss how they would offer their expertise in the development of the ministry research project and respond to questions. From August 2020 through March 2021, monthly meetings averaging one and a half hours were held via Zoom platform with the professional associates. During this timeframe, I contacted the Cincinnati Urban League to be the location of the workshop, contacted caterers for continental breakfast and lunch menus and prices, drafted a workshop flyer, and developed and collected research instruments to be used.

### *Development*

The biblically based workshop expanded over a three-day weekend. Initially, the workshop was scheduled to be held in-person at the Cincinnati Urban League in the community of Avondale of the ministry context that includes the local church and the immediate community. However, due to unforeseen circumstances stemming from the Covid-19 Pandemic, the workshop was modified from an in-person format to a virtual Zoom online format. This required securing a Zoom technician with expertise.

In January 2021, I consulted and secured a male Zoom technician. In February 2021, the male Zoom technician attended the monthly Zoom meeting with the professional associates to discuss the needs for the workshop and to obtain recommendations from the Zoom technician who suggested pre-screening participants level of comfort using Zoom, having a one-hour dry run rehearsal with the speakers the day prior to the workshop to find out the needs of each speaker (sharing screens, PowerPoint, audio/visual material) and submission of a videotape of their presentation in

the event they had an emergency and would not be available on the date of the workshop. These recommendations were well received by the professional associates and me. However, after pondering the sensitivity of the topic, I consulted with my professional associates regarding the need to seek a female Zoom technician. The professional associates agreed and a female Zoom technician was secured.

### *Data Gathering Methods*

Several methods were used to gather data for the ministry project. Google Forms were used to create a registration form, pre-survey, post-survey, questionnaire, and a state shame and guilt scale to capture the individual and collective responses of the workshop participants and a registration form that included questions specific to participants' comfort level using Zoom. An individual fifteen-minute meeting was scheduled with each registered participant to complete a pre-screening interview to review Informed Consent form, qualifications, and expectations of completing all scheduled sessions.

## **Implementation**

### *Registration*

The workshop flyer was emailed to my contextual associates who posted the flyer, with a Google form registration link, on the ministry context's Facebook page and church's website. The workshop flyer was scheduled to be posted from March 15, 2021 – March 31, 2021 but the date was extended until April 23, 2021 to give opportunity for any adult female interested in attending. A Quick Response Code (QRC) was added to



flyers that were physically posted in libraries within the ministry context's immediate community. This would allow interested women to use their cell phones to scan the QRC that was connected to the Google form registration link for the women to complete and submit.

### *Registrants*

Initially eighteen women registered prior to the workshop date. One participant sent an email stating she could no longer participant due to a family emergency. Another participant sent an email stating she no longer wanted to participate after receiving a copy of the Informed Consent form. Another withdrew the day before the workshop stating she would not have the time commitment. On the day of the workshop, one of the participants discontinued her participation at the beginning of the workshop due to having technology difficulties. A woman registered on the day of the workshop but noted on her registration form that she was not able to participate in all three days so she did not participate.

### *Workshop Agenda*

In March 2021, I developed the workshop agenda that was finalized early April 2021. The workshop agenda including a pre-workshop on Friday, April 23, 2021 from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m., workshop on Saturday, April 24, 2021 from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and post-workshop interviews on Sunday, April 25, 2021 from 5:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. The workshop agenda included a ten-minute snippets of my spiritual journey and testimony as “Table Talk” to connect with each speaker's topic.

### *Pre-Screening*

On April 5, 2021, the informed consent form was emailed to all the registrants. Between April 5, 2021 – April 7, 2021, a fifteen-minute individual Zoom meeting was scheduled with each registered participant to thank the participants for registering, make sure they met the criteria and to read and review the informed consent form, ascertain their knowledge and use of Zoom, encouraged to use a laptop computer or tablet rather than a cell phone, remain in room with total privacy, answer any questions and concerns and have the participant electronically sign the informed consent form. The participants were presented the following pre-screening questions:

#### Pre-Screening Questionnaire

1. Ask if registrant is she is in a room with privacy.
2. Ask a female who is eighteen years and older.
3. Ask if registrant is currently pregnant.
4. Ask registrant to respond to the “Hello and Welcome!” posted in the Chat Box.
5. Share Zoom screen to display Informed Consent form and read it to the registrant.
6. Inform registrant that she may use her first name or an alias name on her Zoom screen.
7. Ask registrant if she has any questions or concerns?
8. Inform registrant that the Informed Consent form will be emailed for electronic signature, date, and submission to the ministry project overseer.
9. Inform registrant that workshop materials and agenda will be provided next week after they electronically sign, date, and return the Informed Consent form.

10. Encouraged registrant to contact me by phone number provided or by email for any questions or concerns prior to the workshop date.

### *Workshop Reminder*

An email was sent to the registered participants reminding them of the upcoming workshop and attached the workshop agenda, speaker bios, ground rules, and community resource list. Participants were encouraged to feel free to partake of their refreshments throughout the course of the workshop. The Zoom link to be used for all three workshop days and dates was also included in the email.

### *Workshop Material Waterpot*

One week prior to the workshop weekend, I delivered a water pot of various colors with a bow on the handle to each workshop registrant. Each waterpot was filled with two small bottles of purified water, a journal, colorful scripture cards, colored index card to use to write questions or comments for speakers, pack of permanent markers, stickers, two colored ink pens a standing cross with grace written on it and individual bags of cheese crackers, peanuts, fruit snacks, granola bars, and pretzels. The goal was to provide the participant with the necessary tools for the workshop as well as a keepsake gift.

### *Pre-Workshop (4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.)*

On Friday, April 23, 2021, all four speakers, the Zoom technicians, and I met via Zoom platform to introduce the speakers to everyone present, discuss any Zoom technical

needs of each speaker, review the workshop agenda, answer any questions and concerns and request the speakers log onto Zoom thirty minutes prior to their presentation.

*Pre-Workshop (6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.)*

On Friday, April 23, 2021, I served as the primary host and logged onto Zoom at 5:45 p.m. along with the Zoom technician who played praise and worship music videos from 5:45 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Thirteen participants logged onto Zoom between 5:45 p.m. – 6:05 p.m. Each registrant was admitted who signed an Informed Consent form. I welcomed all the participants, conducted an opening prayer, and introduced myself. A five-minute icebreaker was conducted and the participants were asked to use an index card in their workshop waterpot and write as many legitimate words as possible that could be made using the letters from the word “shame” in one minute. There was one winner who presented eleven words from the word shame. The winner was informed that she would receive a \$5.00 Chick-Fil-A gift card. The icebreaker produced laughter and a more relaxing atmosphere as the winner read off her words of which some were unfamiliar to many.

The ministry leader read over the ground rules and asked if there were any questions or any additional rules that the participants would like to suggest. There were no additional rules suggested. The informed consent form was read again, and participants were asked if they had any questions or concerns to which there were none. The Zoom logistics were discussed with the participants regarding being visible on camera during the entire workshop and to mute their mics and turn off the video cameras during break and lunch time. They were encouraged to ask question or make comments

during and after the speakers' presentations. They were informed of their options to ask questions or make comments using the Zoom Chat Box or they could unmute themselves and speak directly.

The participants were expected to complete the pre-survey, questionnaire, and State, Shame and Guilt Scale. A pre-generated URL link was posted in the Chat Box one at a time. Participants were requested to go to the Chat Box and click on the URL link that opened a Google form for each document. All three URL links were posted separately in the Chat Box after all participants stated that they were finished.

An overview of the agenda for Saturday, April 24, 2021, was provided. The participants were informed that they could begin logging onto Zoom at 7:45 a.m. They were informed that praise and worship music videos would be played and opening prayer would begin at 7:45 a.m. and end at 8:15 a.m.

I transitioned to begin sharing how my spiritual autobiography school assignment led to the birthing my ministry research project after discovering an overarching theme of shame throughout the course of my life. The participants were informed that a song titled, "Goodbye Shame" by Joy Story was getting ready to be played and they were asked to write in their journals any words or phrases in the song lyrics used to describe shame. The Zoom technician played the song as the participants listened to it. The participants were given five minutes to write down what stood out for them and then invited to share if they felt comfortable. The following is what the participants shared:

Participant #One	Lies, Whispering, Fear, Time to go
Participant #Two	Handcuffs, Free, Bondage, Hiding
Participant #Three	My heart skip beats, Lying, Tired

Participant #Four	Never be the same
Participant #Five	I need you to go
Participant #Six	Get your shame off me
Participant #Seven	Not welcome here anymore
Participant #Eight	Visited my mind such a long time ago
Participant #Nine	I don't need you anymore
Participant #Ten	Life, change, Handcuffs, Never the same
Participant #Eleven	You made my heart bleed
Participant #Twelve	Why; What do you want?
Participant #Thirteen	Fooled me into thinking I was getting a shining knight

When I asked if anyone wanted to share, the participants began to share one after another without hesitation. I thanked the participants for sharing and informed them that the some of these words and phrases will be addressed by the speakers on Saturday, April 24, 2021. We then transitioned to begin sharing my spiritual journey and personal testimony.

*Table Talk #1: "COMMUNITY"*

A picture of me being held by her mother when I was an infant was shared on the Zoom screen for all participants to see. I then reflected on how my mother was holding and cuddling me as if to protect me from the world. I shared the first portion of my testimony of community which consisted of my parents who were married, siblings, extended family, family friends, and church family. I also reflected on vacations with family, family reunions, and being spoiled by grandparents yet none of my community could keep my life from beginning to crumble at age seven. The participants appeared to

be listening intently at this point and concluded my first testimony and informed the participants that my life events would be shared at the workshop on Saturday, April 24, 2021. The workshop was closed with prayer and I reminded all the participants that they could begin logging onto Zoom at 7:45 a.m., the starting time for the workshop and to bring their workshop waterpot containing their workshop materials.

The participants were informed that I would remain after the closing prayer to speak with anyone who had concerns or questions. One participant stayed behind to share that one of the questions on the survey she did not respond to because it did not apply to her. The participant was reminded that she should only complete what she felt comfortable completing.

### *Workshop*

On Friday, April 24, 2021, I served as the primary host and logged onto Zoom at 7:45 a.m. along with the Zoom technician who played Praise and Worship music videos from 7:45 a.m. – 8:15 a.m. Thirteen participants logged onto Zoom between 7:45 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. From 8:00 a.m. – 8:15 a.m., the participants engaged in praise and worship followed by a prayer.

### *Table Talk #2: “CRUMBLING”*

Thoughts and feelings were when my life began to crumble. I thought how could I be so stupid, unworthy, less than, hiding, fearful of rejection, sensitive, withdrawn, isolated, depressed and unlovable.

Dr. Neisha Wiley received her Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership from Northern Kentucky University. She is a Licensed Social Worker in the state of Ohio. She has worked in the field of Social Work for over twenty-years ranging from addictions, severe mental health, teens, maternal health, children with disabilities, foster youth, young adults, first generation college students, and adult learners.

Dr. Neisha Wiley spoke on the topic, “What is Shame?” She provided Dr. Brené Brown’s definition of shame “the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing that we are flawed and therefore unworthy of love and belonging – something we’ve experienced, done, or failed to do makes us unworthy of connection” and guilt is “holding something we’ve done or failed to do up against our values and feeling psychological discomfort.”<sup>1</sup> She distinguished shame and guilt. She stated that there are two different types of shame. One is “Situational Shame” that is connected to guilt when a person fails to meet a goal or standard. It is when a person feels like they have failed at something. Usually the person will use the phrase “should have” and encouraged the participants to instead use “could have” or “would have” if they believe they did not make a good decision. “Intrinsic Shame” is secondary shame that leaves a person feeling unacceptable, defected, unlovable, and wanting to hide or disappear. This is usually a result of abuse such as verbal, physical, sexual abuse, trauma, loss, parentification of children when a mother labels herself a bad parent because her child got into trouble at school. Shame can result in perfectionistic tendencies and relational disconnect.

Dr. Wiley used a visual exercise of CDs of shame playing in a woman’s mind. She asked the participants to write down “What are the things that won’t shut off in our

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<sup>1</sup> Brené Brown, “Shame vs. Guilt,” Brené Brown, <https://brenebrown.com/articles/2013/01/14/shame-v-guilt/>.



minds?”<sup>2</sup> Dr. Wiley gave the participants five minutes to write down their thoughts. One participant shared about a CD tape that would not shut off about her brother’s deaths. Another participant shared how the “parentification of children” CD tape would not shut off because every time something goes wrong in her adult children’s lives, her children make her feel like it is her fault. Dr. Wiley presented the following scriptures for encouragement: 1 John 1:19, Hebrews 12:2, Isaiah 54:4, Zephaniah 3:19, Gen. 2:25 and 1 Peter 5:8.

*Table Talk #3: “CRISES”*

I shared my traumatic life experiences at ages seven, eight, nineteen, thirty-two, and thirty-three. I elaborated on how I did not process what happened to me but knew I began to experience bouts of depression and anxiety. Although I could not place my finger on what was wrong, but I knew something was different about myself.

Dr. Dana Harley is an Associate Professor at the University of Cincinnati. She is a national award-winning educator, researcher, and "seasoned" practitioner in the field of social work. She earned her PhD at The Ohio State University in 2011. Dr. Dana is a 2003 graduate of the University of Cincinnati, Master of Social Work Program. She graduated summa cum laude from Wilberforce University in 2001. Dr. Dana is a Licensed Independent Social Worker-Supervisor and has over a decade of clinical social work practice experience.

Dr. Harley, spoke on the topic “The Risk Factors for Developing Shame.” She opened her session with a guided breathing exercise. She discussed one of psychologist

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<sup>2</sup> Neisha Wiley, “Bye-Bye Shame, Hello Me!” (workshop, April 24, 2021).

Erik Erikson's stages of development being autonomy versus shame. She discussed how acts done to a person, acts the person has committed and external messages from others leading to one feeling shame. Dr. Harley stated that one of three girls experience childhood sexual abuse. She was very transparent and shared her own shameful life experience. She stated that women internalize things and take ownership and allow a tape to play repeatedly until it becomes real to them. Dr. Harley displayed a feelings chart and pointed out feelings such as left out, lonely, isolated, and disgusted. She suggested a healing shame acronym of S (Supporting), H (Healthy), A (Attitudes), M (Moods) and E (Emotions). She stated that naming the shame reduces power and allows a woman to see herself as God see her. She further encouraged women to seek professional counseling and normalized seeking help to begin the journey of healing.

Dr. Harley encouraged the participants to re-shape negative messages to positive messages and gave examples. Instead of saying, "Too much happened to me," replace it with "I'm victorious, not a victim;" "Everyone is better than me" to "I'm the head and not the tail." "Nobody knows how it feels" to "I'm not the only one;" "I'm not worthy" to "I am made in the image and likeness of God;" "I can't do it" to "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Dr. Harley stated that fighting shame is an ongoing battle. She gave the following scriptures: Zephaniah 3:17, Romans 8:1, Psalm 36:7 and Daniel 2:22. She stated, "Nothing is in us that God's light, Jesus Christ, cannot cover."<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Harley answered questions from participants throughout her presentation. One participant asked how does she help a client who has "broken record language?" Dr. Harley stated that she has the client repeat what they said and then asks the client if this is

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<sup>3</sup> Dana Harley, "Bye-Bye Shame, Hello Me!" (workshop, April 24, 2021).

a healthy or sabotaging message and then asks how can we re-shape the language to be a healthy message? Another participant asked if it is important to talk to someone. Dr. Harley encouraged the participant to talk to a trusting person to verbally get out the shameful message, write it down so it does not stay in your head and prayer.<sup>4</sup>

*Table Talk #4: "CONVERSATIONS"*

I shared conversations with two different pastors about shameful experiences. One pastor was non-judgmental, genuine, a great listener, and was helpful. The other pastor was the total opposite and left me feeling worse than when I arrived after blaming me for my situation.

Dr. Jacqueline Smith is an associate professor at Regent University in the School of Psychology and Counseling. Smith holds an undergraduate degree in music therapy from Ohio University, and completed both her master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling and doctoral degree in Counseling Education and supervision at the University of Cincinnati. In addition, Smith received post-graduate training in structural family therapy from the Cincinnati Family Therapy Center, the American Association of Christian Counselors, and Certified Belief Therapist training through the Therapon Institute. Smith has more than thirty years of experience in community mental health counseling, which includes a small, private, Christian counseling practice for eight years. She holds Professional Counselor (LPC) licensure in Ohio, and Professional Clinical Counselor licensure (LPCC) in Kentucky.

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<sup>4</sup> Harley, "Bye-Bye Shame, Hello Me!"

Dr. Smith spoke on the topic, “The Effects of Shame.” Dr. Smith shared how shame makes a person feel worthless, rejected, cast out, small, powerless, and believing she is not worthy of love. She stated that guilt and shame were conceived in the Garden of Eden. She further stated that “guilt is the wound and shame is the scar that is caused by multiple wounds and not just a single event that become triggers.”<sup>5</sup> Dr. Smith stated that women experience shame differently. Women typically will think of who, how, and what they should be. Dr. Smith stated we live in a patriarchal society and are often silenced. Women need relationships, but live in secrecy due to fear of being judged.

Dr. Smith described four ways people react to shame and drew a compass to illustrate her points. First point on the compass is withdrawal, isolation, and running away. The second is attacking self with negative self-talk and masochism. Third is avoidance and denial that places one at risk of using substances, abusing alcohol, and being distracted by engaging in risky behavior. Fourth is attacking others. Dr. Smith stated that clients must be examined to determine if they are gripped by shame that presents as sadness and anxiety. She stated that instead of referring to mental illness, she uses the phrase mental wellness because everyone is on the spectrum depending on what is happening in their lives. This point resonated with several participants who stated this really helped them to normalize our mental wellbeing. One participant asked if societal anxiety can be an indication of shame? Dr. Smith stated that there is a 1:1 correlation of shame and societal anxiety. She further pointed out that shame can place people at risk of having eating disorders, substance use/abuse disorders, and behavioral addictions such as sex, gaming, and internet. She stated that shame can cause a person not to see their sinful

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<sup>5</sup> Jacqueline Smith, “Bye-Bye Shame, Hello Me!” (workshop, April 24, 2021).

behavior as sin but rather they are the sin. Dr. Smith emphatically stated that God dealt with our guilt would and the scar of shame on the cross. She encouraged everyone to engage in self-awareness and to remember that “I’m ok and it is my personal best.”<sup>6</sup>

*Table Talk #5: “CONFESSIONS”*

I shared that after many years of feeling shame, one day during my time of personal meditation, I opened my Bible that immediately opened to Psalm chapter fifty-one. I began to read this passage of scripture to the women as they listened intently. I then shared how this passage of scripture delivered me from the shame that weighed heavily upon me. For the first time in my life, I experienced a burden lifted off me and inner peace within. This was the beginning of my journey towards healing.

Dr. Eaddy is a 2015 Princeton University Black Theology and Leadership Institute Fellow. She received her Master of Divinity from The Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University. She earned her Doctor of Ministry from the Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School and is currently pursuing certification in Thanatology. She Co-Chairs the Advisory Council of The International End of Life Doula Association (INELDA), where she was trained and currently serves as an instructor for the Death Doula training program. She is a member of several organizations, including The Association for Death Education and Counseling (ADEC), the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), and The Association of Professional Chaplains (APC). Dr. Eaddy is the CEO and founder of Thoughtful Transitions.

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<sup>6</sup> Smith, “Bye-Bye Shame, Hello Me!”

Dr. Eaddy opened her presentation with “Shed Shame.” She began by reading a poem “Sleep without Sleeping” that described childhood sexual abused. At the end, she revealed that this poem was her personal testimony. As she was reading the poem, several of the participants began to cry. Dr. Eaddy asked, “How has shame impacted your relationship with you?”<sup>7</sup> She stated that shame prevents us from having the same level of care for ourselves. She stated, “My tears hold meaning just like yours...I matter just like my neighbor.”<sup>8</sup> She remarked that we place others above ourselves in an unhealthy alignment. She further stated that we put up guards and walls to protect us but they have not protected us from everything. She encouraged the participants to speak to themselves and say “it was not your fault.” She asked the participants, “Do you need to go back and tell your (put in your ages of abuse) and tell yourself, God says you matter...God values me?”<sup>9</sup> Dr. Eaddy reminded the participants that God said “very good” when He created each one of them and that what God says about them is true. When we are disconnected from God we think God does not care. Shame will allow us to believe the lie that God does not care and this results in us accepting bad treatment.

Dr. Eaddy stated that there are some relationships you will have to cancel because they want you to wear shame. She stated, “Repair the relationship with you and re-define the relationships with others.”<sup>10</sup> She further stated that overcoming shame requires a relationship with oneself, others, and God. Dr. Eaddy paused and asked the participants to write down what they need to say to themselves. She allowed a couple of minutes and

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<sup>7</sup> Jamie Eaddy, “Bye-Bye Shame, Hello Me!” (workshop, April 24, 2021).

<sup>8</sup> Eaddy, “Bye-Bye Shame, Hello Me!”

<sup>9</sup> Eaddy, “Bye-Bye Shame, Hello Me!”

<sup>10</sup> Eaddy, “Bye-Bye Shame, Hello Me!”

then asked if any of the participants wanted to share. One participant shared that their biggest shame was dropping out of school. Another participant shared that their biggest shame was losing their virginity before marriage.

*Table Talk #6: “CLEANSING: CREATIVE ACTIVITY”*

I began to share the account in John 4:4 in which Jesus said it was necessary for Him to go to Samaria. I further expounded on John 4:16-18 and the surrounding context of the Samaritan woman at the well who came with her waterpot for natural water but what she needed was the living water that Jesus gave to her. I displayed my water pot that was decorated with scriptures shared by the speakers, phrases, and words of encouragement given by the speakers and drawings to reflect how I was personally impacted by the information shared at the workshop. Fifteen minutes were allotted for the participants to decorate their water pots to reflect what impacted them. After fifteen minutes, the participants were asked if any of them wanted to display their water pots. Three women displayed their water pots and read off scriptures, inspirational words, pictures they drew and stickers placed to illustrate the impact of the information shared by the ministry project overseer and speakers. Several of the women began to cry as they shared accounts of sexual abuse and the messages from today that helped them to be transparent.

A visual demonstration was presented using a bottle of water labeled “purified” and poured it into the waterpot and stated that Jesus’ death on the cross purified us and cleansed us from guilt and shame. Women no longer need to go through life carrying a water pot of shame in their hearts, but their hearts can today be cleansed so that they can

begin the journey of healing. The ministry project overseer took out a package of dirt and a package of flower seeds to demonstrate planting new seeds of truth of God's word and who He says we are and our identity is in Him. She further shared that every time they use their water pots, they will see all of the reminders to themselves of who God says they are and to no longer water the lies of the enemy but to pour in the purifying water to water the seeds of God's truth.

*Table Talk #7: "CONCLUSION" – BYE-BYE SHAME, HELLO ME!*

The project was concluded by reading a paragraph directly from my spiritual autobiography that stated, "I believe everything I have experienced has been allowed by God and used by God to prepare me to become the person I am today, place me on the spiritual path to grow in relationship with Him and propel me into the ministry He has set before me. I used to ask God, "Why me" when it related to traumatic experiences in my life and still ask this question today, but today I ask this question from the lens of amazement that God can take all things, not just the good things, but even the devastating, shameful and traumatic experiences and make them work for my good as recorded in Romans 8:28."

I thanked all the participants, speakers, professional associates, and Zoom technicians for their help. All the participants remarked how blessed they were and thankful for the level of transparency from the ministry project overseer and the speakers. Several of the participants stated that they were grateful for the small number of women participants as it created an atmosphere of safety and intimacy. The workshop was closed



out with prayer, and I reminded them of their individual interviews the next day. I remained on Zoom until all the participants signed off.

*Post-Workshop Interviews Summary*

Sunday, April 25, 2021, Post Workshop Individual Zoom Interviews (5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.)

(1) DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

Participant #1	None
Participant #2	None
Participant #3	None
Participant #4	None
Participant #5	None
Participant #6	No...It left me hungry for more...
Participant #7	No
Participant #8	No
Participant #9	I feel like I have been emptied out...made afresh...shame has been dealt!
Participant #10	I decompressed...all of the speakers “hit some buttons” ...I have been hidden...didn’t really know who I am...I don’t trust my decisions as opposed to what do I want...I need to write
Participant #11	None
Participant #12	None

(2) WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE ONE TAKE AWAY?

Participant #1	Any time you fall short, the way you feel does not take away your worth...looking at Christ who makes the difference...Hebrews 12:2
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- Participant #2 Wow...to hear a mother share her story...I identified with stories shared because I did not know anything either...I would tell a young lady starting her menstrual I would talk to her about things that could happen...my mother told us what we could and could not do...I did not know it was a generational fix...You don't know what you are influenced by...I know I am no longer shamed about these things. God put everything in us that we need for life.
- Participant #3 Everything was very thoughtful...all speakers were outstanding...they all could have gone deeper in their strength...
- Participant #4 Excellent workshop...learned difference between shame and guilt...situational shame versus intrinsic...situational shame is connected to guilt...shame can hinder your creativity...I would not be myself if shame hindered me...favorite speaker is Dr. Jacqueline Smith...
- Participant #5 Enjoyed how everyone was participating...Dr. Eaddy's poem
- Participant #6 Shame is not really your fault...things happen in people's life, and you can't hold yourself responsible for what was done to you.
- Participant #7 Speakers were phenomenal...everything was well planned...difference between shame and guilt...level of transparency...
- Participant #8 It was an awesome workshop...well planned and delivered; Tears mean something! People got free a little bit...we all have some shame and we are all on the spectrum.
- Participant #9 Shame and guilt...how we let it define us...
- Participant #10 Definition of shame and guilt and that they are not the same.
- Participant #11 Did not realize how many women struggling with shame...speaker said one in six women have been sexually abused.
- Participant #12 Cannot think of one now

### (3) WHAT SHOULD BE ADDED TO FUTURE TRAINING ON SHAME?

- Participant #1 Any of the presenters could hold their own workshops on the topics they presented. Post question if any participant would be interested in being involved in a future accountability group quarterly to see how they are doing on their journey. Model – initial workshop is virtual and ongoing follow-up workshop are in-person or whatever is necessary .

Participant #2	Coping mechanisms
Participant #3	A wider window for each speaker for they can get anchored in their professional area...when I give my testimony
Participant #4	Add other testimonies of people we do not know...testimonies helped identify with something real world...I am not the only one going through this... get a buddy system...
Participant #5	Role playing...Sexual Assault Seminar to be a Mentor
Participant #6	Topic on loss (had a miscarriage...would have shared if she stayed longer...)
Participant #7	Extended workshop on shame...
Participant #8	Nothing
Participant #9	What people do to us because of their shame how do we handle that?
Participant #10	More training on shame and any future training to be apart
Participant #11	Group meet again to have a one hour review of shame questions covered on pre-post survey
Participant #12	One hour group to discuss how families with a family member with mental illness are affected.
(4)	REVIEW LIST OF COMMUNITY RESOURCES All participants reported receiving and reviewing
(5)	All participants were informed they would receive a \$10 gift card
(6)	Would you be interested in being a part of an accountability or one hour follow up group in three months?
Participants #1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12	No      Yes
Participants #4, 5, 9	Yes    Yes

## Summary of Learning

### *Pre-Survey Results*

Although there were thirteen participants present, there were eleven forms submitted. It appears that two participants opted not to complete a survey or forgot to hit submit.

The first question was a True/False question regarding the definition of shame. There were seven responses for “True” and four responses for “False” representing 65% of the participants responded correctly.

The second question was a True/False question regarding shame’s connection to values and psychological discomfort. There were eleven responses for “True” and zero responses for “False” representing 100% responded correctly.

The third question requested the selection of one of two samples representing shame. The first sample was a statement representing shame and the second statement represented guilt. There were three responses for the first sample and nine responses for the second sample representing 30 % responded correctly. Of note, it appears that one of the participants selected both statements resulting in twelve responses.

The fourth question was a True/False question regarding shame having both a positive and negative effect. There were seven responses for “True” and four responses for “False” representing 65% responded correctly. The fifth question was a True/False question regarding the importance of relationships in healing from shame. There were eleven responses for “True” representing 100% responded correctly.

The sixth question was a multiple-choice question regarding shame being the same as embarrassment, guilt, humiliation, all of the above or none of the above. There were two responses for embarrassment, two responses for guilt, three responses for humiliation, nine responses for all of the above and one response for none of the above representing 10% responded correctly.

The seventh question was a multiple-choice question regarding shame affecting a woman's physical health, mental/emotional health, relational health, spiritual health, all of the above or none of the above. One participant selected physical health, one participant selected mental/emotional health, one participant selected relational health, one participant selected spiritual health, eleven selected all of the above and zero participants selected none of the above representing 100% responded correctly. Of note, it appears that one of the participants selected all of the possible choices.

The eighth question was a multiple-choice question regarding risk factor for a woman developing shame being childhood experiences, failing to meet your own expectations, failing to meet society's expectations, failing to meet family's expectations, traumatic experiences, biological traits, all of the above or none of the above. Two responses for childhood experiences, one response for failing to meet your own expectations, two responses for failing to meet society's expectations, two responses for failing to meet family's expectations, two responses for traumatic experiences, one response for biological traits, eleven responses for all of the above and zero responses for none of the above representing 100% responded correctly. Of note, it appears a couple of the participants responded to all of the choices except for "none of the above."

*Questionnaire Summary*

Although there were thirteen participants present, there were ten forms submitted. It appears that three participants opted not to complete a survey or forgot to hit submit. The first question requested participants select the age range representative of them. Zero responded for (eighteen to twenty-five), one responded for (twenty-five to thirty-five), zero responded for (thirty-five to forty-five), two responded for (forty-five to fifty-five), three responded for (fifty-five to sixty-five) and four responded for (sixty-five plus). The results indicate 90% of the participants were forty-five years and older.

The second question requested participants select the race representative of them. Ten responded to African American, zero responded to Asian, zero responded to Indian and zero responded to Latino/Hispanic. The results indicate 100% of the participants were African American.

The third question requested participants select the level of education representative of them. One responded to did not graduate from school, zero responded to GED, one responded to high school diploma, one responded to some college and seven responded to college graduate. The results indicate 70% of the participants graduated from college.

The fourth question requested participants to select all of the choices that best described themselves. One responded “I feel like a failure,” nine responded “I hide things about myself for fear of being judged,” two responded “I avoid relationships with people,” one responded “I am not good enough” and zero responded “I worry that if people get to know me, they would not like me.” The results indicate 10 % feel like a

failure, 90% hide things about themselves, 20% avoid relationships with others and 10% view themselves as not good enough.

### *State Shame and Guilt Scale Summary*

Although there were thirteen participants present, there were twelve forms submitted. It appears that one participant opted not to complete a survey or forgot to hit submit. The first question requested participants to respond to the statement “I want to sink into the floor and disappear.” Nine responded “not feeling this way at all,” three responded “feeling somewhere between one to three,” one responded “feeling this way somewhat,” zero responded for “feeling somewhere between four to five,” and zero responded “feeling this way very strongly.” The results indicate 75% do not feel this way at all.

The second question requested participants to respond to the statement “I feel remorse, regret.” Three responded “not feeling this way at all,” six responded “feeling somewhere between one to three,” two responded for “feeling this way somewhat,” one responded “feeling somewhere between four to five,” and zero responded “feeling this way very strongly.” The results indicate 25% did not feel this way at all, 17% feel this way somewhat, 50% were feeling somewhere between one to three, and 8% were feeling somewhere between four to five.

The third question requested participants to respond to the statement “I feel small.” Six responded “not feeling this way at all.” five responded “feeling somewhere between one to three,” one responded “feeling this way somewhat,” zero responded “feeling somewhere between four and five,” and zero responded “feeling this way very

strongly.” The results indicate 50% do not feel this way at all, 42% feel somewhere between one to three, and 8% feeling this way somewhat.

The fourth question requested participants to respond to the statement “I feel tension about something I have done.” Six responded for “not feeling this way at all,” two responded “feeling somewhere between one to three,” three responded “feeling this way somewhat,” one responded “feeling somewhere between four to five,” and zero responded “feeling this way very strongly.” The results indicate 50% do not feel this way at all, 17% feeling somewhere between one to three, 25% feeling this way somewhat, and 8% feeling this way somewhere between four and five.

The fifth question requested participants to respond to the statement “I feel like I am a bad person.” Nine responded “not feeling this way at all,” three responded “feeling somewhere between one to three,” zero responded “feeling this way somewhat,” zero responded “feeling somewhere between four to five,” and zero responded “feeling this way very strongly.” The results indicate 75% do not feel this way at all and 25% feel somewhere between one and three.

The sixth question requested participants to respond to the statement “I cannot stop thinking about something.” Three responded “not feeling this way at all,” five responded “feeling somewhere between one to three,” three responded “feeling this way somewhat,” zero responded “feeling somewhere between four to five,” and one responded “feeling this way very strongly.” The results indicate 25% do not feel this way at all, 42% feel somewhere between one to three, 25 % feeling this way somewhat, and 8% feeling this way strongly.



The seventh question requested participants to respond to the statement “I feel humiliated, disgraced.” Nine responded “not feeling this way at all,” two responded “feeling somewhere between one to three,” one responded “feeling this way somewhat,” zero responded “feeling somewhere between four to five,” and zero responded “feeling this way very strongly.” The results indicate 75% do not feel this way at all, 17% feel somewhere between one to three, and 8% feeling this way somewhat.

The eighth question requested participants to respond to the statement “I feel like apologizing or confessing.” Seven responded “not feeling this way at all,” three responded “feeling somewhere between one to three,” zero responded “feeling this way somewhat,” one responded “feeling somewhere between four to five,” and one responded “feeling this way very strongly.” The results indicate 59% do not feel this way at all, 25% feel somewhere between one and three, 8% feel somewhere four to five, and 8% feel this way very strongly.

The ninth question requested participants to respond to the statement “I feel worthless and powerless.” Six responded “not feeling this way at all,” five responded “feeling somewhere between one to three,” one responded “feeling this way somewhat,” zero responded “feeling somewhere between four to five,” and zero responded for “feeling this way very strongly.” The results indicate 50% do not feel this way at all, 42% feel somewhere between one and three, and 8% feel this way somewhat.

The tenth question requested participants to respond to the statement “I feel bad about something I have done.” Five responded “not feeling this way at all,” four responded “feeling somewhere between one to three,” one responded “feeling this way somewhat,” one responded “feeling somewhere between four to five,” and one responded

“feeling this way very strongly.” The results indicate 42% do not feel this way at all, 33% feel somewhere between one to three, 8% feel somewhere between four and five, and 8% feel this way very strongly.

### *Post Survey Summary*

Although there were twelve participants present, there were ten forms submitted. It appears that one participant did not complete a form or forgot to hit submit. One of the participants had to leave after lunch break. The first question was a True/False question regarding the definition of shame. There were seven responses for “True” and three responses for “False” representing 70% of the participants responded correctly.

The second question was a True/False question regarding shame’s connection to values and psychological discomfort. There were seven responses for “True” and three responses for “False” representing 70% responded correctly. The third question requested the selection of one of two samples representing shame. The first sample was a statement representing shame and the second statement represented guilt. There were eight responses for the first sample and two responses for the second sample representing 80 % responded correctly.

The fourth question was a True/False question regarding shame having both a positive and negative effect. There were seven responses for “True” and five responses for “False” representing 65% responded correctly. Of note, it appears that two participants responded to both. The fifth question was a True/False question regarding the importance of relationships in healing from shame. There were ten responses for “True” representing 100% responded correctly.

The sixth question was a multiple-choice question regarding shame being the same as embarrassment, guilt, humiliation, all of the above or none of the above. There were three responses for embarrassment, one response for guilt, four responses for humiliation, four responses for all of the above, and one response for one of the above representing 10% responded correctly. Of note, it appears there were three participants that selected more than one choice.

The seventh question was a multiple-choice question regarding shame affecting a woman's physical health, mental/emotional health, relational health, spiritual health, all of the above or none of the above. Zero responded for physical health, zero responded for mental/emotional health, zero responded for relational health, zero responded for spiritual health, ten responded for all of the above and zero responded for none of the above representing 100% responded correctly.

The eighth question was a multiple-choice question regarding risk factor for women to develop shame being childhood experiences, failing to meet your own expectations, failing to meet society's expectations, failing to meet family's expectations, traumatic experiences, biological traits, all the above or none of the above. One response for childhood experiences, one response for failing to meet your own expectations, one response for failing to meet society's expectations, one response for failing to meet family's expectations, one response for traumatic experiences, zero responded for biological traits, nine responses for all of the above and zero responses for none of the above representing 90% responded correctly. Of note, it appears one participant responded to all choices except none of the above.

## **Conclusion**

The ministry project went extremely well. The project proposal timeline and specific tasks assisted with planning, developing and implementing the workshop. The professional associates and contextual associates were extremely committed and supportive of the ministry project and everyone faithfully attended scheduled meetings, engaged in trouble shooting, and made the necessary adjustments to accommodate a Zoom format. The continual support and meetings and feedback with Dr. Francis and Dr. Sharon Ellis-Davis was invaluable.

Initially, the ministry project overseer had concerns of how good participants would engage on a Zoom platform and any technical difficulties that could occur and disrupt the workshop flow. However, the participants, speakers and the Zoom technicians all worked well without any problems. This could be attributed it to the ministry project overseer having individual Zoom pre-screening interviews to gauge how well the participants could log on and use the Zoom features such as the chat box, muting and unmuting their mics, turning on and off their video camera. Also, the dry run meeting with the speakers and the Zoom technicians assisted in identifying who would need to be made co-hosts for their presentations and if they would be using any audio/visual materials that would require additional testing ahead of time. The speakers were well prepared, professional, creative in their presentations, and engaged the participants beyond imagination. The two professional associates who assisted on the day of the workshop were of tremendous help in retrieving and forwarding questions and comments in the chat box.

I hoped to have between ten and fifteen participants to allow for intimacy to be built. Ten of the twelve participants were members of the ministry context church. There were no participants from the ministry context community. If the workshop flyer was posted in the community and the workshop was held in-person at a location within the community, there probably would have been representation from the immediate community.

My hypothesis, if women are provided a biblically based awareness workshop on the effects of shame, then women will become more knowledgeable of shame and better equipped to identify their negative shame-based behaviors and begin the journey towards healing was proven based on the responses from the participants during and after the workshop. Having the opportunity to share in the workshop and gaining awareness is the beginning of the healing process. Based upon the post-survey results, State Shame and Guilt Scale, participant comments, level of transparency from the participants and speakers, along with the post-workshop individual participants' feedback during Zoom interviews, the workshop was a success. Additionally, the speakers indicated through email how well planned and how they enjoyed the workshop. They all commented that the Holy Spirit brought all the speakers on one accord as if they had planned it this way.

In the future, I would like to conduct a follow up to see how the participants are doing on their journey towards healing. Because many of the women participants expressed their struggle with shame, it would be of great future interests to research and study how shame impacts a marriage, parenting, men, generations, similarities, and differences for African American and Caucasian women and women in ministry. Shame is a topic that has minimal research and is wide open for new studies. Developing a

counseling model for identifying and addressing women and men suffering from the negative effects of shame. Ultimately, it is of great interest to provide future training and education on the topic of shame to church leadership and membership and the community within the immediate ministry context.

**APPENDIX A**  
**WORKSHOP FLYER**

## WORKSHOP FLYER

## Raising Awareness of the Effects of Shame on Women

# Bye-Bye Shame



# Hello Me!!

Kimberley R. Johnson      Doctoral Candidate  
United Theological Seminary

Friday April 23, 2021 Pre-Workshop 6pm – 8pm  
Saturday April 24, 2021 Workshop 8am – 5pm  
Saturday April 24, 2021 Post - Workshop\* 6pm – 8pm

[Click to REGISTER](#) \*10 minute follow-up individually

**FREE REGISTRATION DEADLINE MARCH 31, 2021**

Must attend Friday and Saturday sessions.  
Participants must be 18 yrs or older and not pregnant  
All virtual workshops are through 

**Email Questions:** [healingfromshame@gmail.com](mailto:healingfromshame@gmail.com)

### SPEAKERS

  
Dr. Jamie Eaddy  
Pastoral Theologian  
CEO/Founder  
[www.healingfromshame.org](http://www.healingfromshame.org)

  
Dana Harley PhD, LISW-S  
Associate Professor  
University of Cincinnati

  
Jacqueline Smith, Ed.D,  
LPCC  
Associate Professor  
Regent University

  
Dr. Neisha Wiley,  
MSW LISW  
Graduate Instructor  
Wright State University



## **APPENDIX B**

### **AGENDA**

Kimberley R. Johnson, Doctoral of Ministry Student

**FRIDAY, APRIL 23, 2021**

<b>6:00 pm – 7:30 pm</b>	Welcome, Opening Prayer, Introductions, Ice Breaker, Ground Rules, Informed Consent Form, Q&A, ZOOM Logistics, Participants Complete Forms Overview of Saturday Workshop and Sunday Individual Interviews
<b>7:30 pm – 8:00 pm</b>	*Table Talk: COMMUNITY Closing Prayer

**SATURDAY, APRIL 24, 2021**

<b>8:00 am – 8:15 am</b>	Participants Check-In
<b>8:15 am – 8:30 am</b>	Welcome, Opening Prayer, Introductions, Ice Breaker, ZOOM Logistics
<b>8:30 am – 8:45 am</b>	*Table Talk: CRUMBLING
<b>8:45 am – 9:45 am</b>	<b>What Is Shame?</b> Dr. Neisha Wiley
<b>9:45 am – 10:00 am</b>	<i>Break</i>
<b>10:00 am – 10:15 am</b>	*Table Talk: CRISES
<b>10:15 am – 11:15 am</b>	<b>Risk Factors for the Development of Shame:</b> Dr. Dana Harley
<b>11:15 am – 11:45 am</b>	<i>Lunch</i>
<b>11:45 am – 12:00 pm</b>	*Table Talk: CONVERSATIONS
<b>12:00 pm – 1:00 pm</b>	<b>Effects of Shame:</b> Dr. Jacqueline Smith
<b>1:00 pm – 1:15 pm</b>	<i>Break</i>
<b>1:15 pm – 1:30 pm</b>	*Table Talk: CONFESSIONS
<b>1:30 pm – 2:30 pm</b>	<b>Significance of Relationships in Healing from Shame:</b> Dr. Jamie Eaddy
<b>2:30 pm – 2:45 pm</b>	<i>Break</i>

<b>2:45pm – 3:30pm</b>	*Table Talk: CLEANSING & CREATIVE ACTIVITY
<b>3:30 pm – 4:00 pm</b>	*Table Talk: CONCLUSION
<b>4:00 pm – 5:00 pm</b> Acknowledgements	Final Q&A, Post-Surveys, Community Resource List, Closing Prayer
<b>SUNDAY, APRIL 25, 2021</b>	
<b>6:00 pm – 8:00 pm</b>	5 – 10 minute individually scheduled interviews

**APPENDIX C**

**GROUND RULES/EXPECTATIONS**

**GROUND RULES/EXPECTATIONS**

1. Please keep your camera videos on and your face in view always except breaks.
2. You may use your first name or an alias on your Zoom screen.
3. Please be respectful of one another.
4. Please keep all information shared confidential.
5. Please only share your own experiences.
6. Please type all your questions in the Chat Box AND make sure the message is sent to the host privately.
7. Please unmute yourself when you are answering a question.
8. Please mute your mics and turn off your camera during breaks and lunch time only.
9. Please return from breaks and lunch promptly.
10. If you need to contact me immediately, please call (513) 470-2797.

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